



2026 Election Security Report Card

Trump Administration Efforts to Secure Our Nation's Election System

September 2026

V1.0



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“Record effort, constrained delivery: a 7.6 of instruments against a 5.1 of results—because what needed no one’s consent worked, and what needed a court or a state did not.”

Grok AI

“A historic 7.6 offensive of executive will struck a 5.1 delivery wall—not from a lack of force, but because unyielding institutional resistance inside the agencies, weaponized procedural drag from hostile courts, and the entrenched influence of foreign-linked cartels and outside conduits proved far harder to dismantle than what presidential power could shatter alone.”

Gemini AI



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1 Executive Summary

The 2026 Election Security Report Card is an assessment of corrective actions taken by the Trump Administration to resolve the election system security issues identified in the 799 Page Election Crime Bureau Report called **The 2020 Election: An Attack Against US Critical Infrastructure**¹. The report documented 824 findings across ten distinct attack vectors.

The central finding of this report card is comparative. Measured by the number of instruments deployed, the breadth of the federal apparatus engaged, the volume of primary-source material forced into the public record, and the willingness to attach federal money to verifiable security conditions, the executive-branch effort to secure American election infrastructure between January 20, 2025 and September 4, 2026 exceeds that of every prior administration by a wide margin. That is not a rhetorical claim. It is the arithmetic of the inventory in Part I, and it survives every countervailing fact carried in this document.

The scale of the effort. More than twenty presidential instruments carry a direct or proximate election nexus. Eleven archives comprising 562 pages of declassified primary-source material on the 2016 and 2020 cycles were published under agency seal — an instrument that did not exist in any previous administration's repertoire at any scale. For the first time in the history of federal election-security funding, homeland-security grant money was conditioned on hand-count auditing, on reconciliation of voters to ballots, and on documentary citizenship verification of the entire registration database. The Justice Department wrote to the chief election officer of every state and the District of Columbia, sued thirty states over voter-roll access, and plans roughly one thousand election monitors for November 3 against 714 in 2024 and 289 in 2022. Two grand juries are sitting. A national aggregation point that had wiretapped election networks in all fifty states was terminated outright. And the border was brought under a degree of operational control not achieved by any administration of either party in the modern record, with southwest border encounters falling 79 percent year over year and Border Patrol apprehensions reaching their lowest level since 1970.

The comparative baseline is what gives that scale meaning. No previous administration conditioned election-security money on audit performance. No previous administration declassified the intelligence record of a contested election over the objection of the agencies that produced it. No previous administration terminated the federal information-sharing architecture embedded in state

¹ The 2020 Election: An Attack Upon US Critical Infrastructure, <https://electioncrimebureau.com/lotsaevidence/>



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election networks, closed the federal information-operations center, or dismantled the foreign-assistance channel that funded the doctrine behind it. The preceding administration moved in the opposite direction on each of these axes, directing every federal agency into voter-registration activity by executive order and defending the aggregation architecture as security. The direction of travel reversed completely, and it reversed across every one of the ten attack vectors simultaneously rather than in one or two areas of political convenience.

The effort score and the effectiveness score are different numbers, and both are reported honestly. Composite effort is rated 7.6 of 10. Composite net effectiveness delivered before November 3, 2026 is rated 5.1 of 10. The gap between those two figures is the analytical content of this report card, and it is not a criticism of the effort. It is a measurement of where American election administration actually places the power to act. Instruments that required no one else's consent — revoking a prior order, declassifying a file, terminating an agreement, designating a cartel, imposing a sanction, closing an agency, securing the border — were executed and are in force. Instruments that had to run through a federal district court or a state election office were, with few exceptions, stopped in one or the other. Twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses, three courts against the citizenship order, and a nationwide stay of the entire operational core of the Postal Service rule are the record of what happens when a self-executing program meets a system in which the states, not the President, run elections.

Four forces account for that gap, and the largest of them is the one least often scored. Judicial drag composites at 5.1, internal federal drag at 4.4, and state drag at 3.5. Media drag — the degree to which coverage and platform distribution conditions denied these actions the public assent on which their survival in a courtroom or a legislature depends — composites at **6.8**, making it the single largest drag factor in the assessment. That finding is carried with its limits attached. No neutral academic measurement of coverage of this administration exists for 2025 or 2026, platform policy moved substantially in the administration's favor over the same period, and the policies at issue poll far better than the diagnosis behind them: identification to vote draws 77 percent support and documentary proof of citizenship 59 percent, while only 28 percent of the public accepts that the 2020 election was rigged. The instructive case is the July 16, 2026 primetime address on election integrity, which one of six major outlets carried in full and which reached roughly one-eleventh of the audience ordinarily available in that hour — and for which the one network that did carry it declined to vouch for the evidence presented, because the government's own technical examination of voting equipment remained unreleased. **Media drag and the administration's own non-delivery are, at the decisive points, the same problem.**



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The bottom line. The administration has done more, across more vectors, with more instruments, and with more disclosure than any predecessor, and it has done so against sustained resistance from federal district courts, from a substantial bloc of state election officials, and from within the federal workforce itself. The residual risk to November 3, 2026 is therefore not a function of insufficient presidential will. It is a function of federalism, of judicial posture, and of three specific unmet deliverables, set out at the end of this report, that remain within the administration's own control and can still be corrected before the election.

2 Scope and method

This assessment inventories what the President and his administration have actually done, and then scores that work against the ten interlocking attack vectors identified in the 2020 election report: election record integrity, electronic voting systems integrity, election results certification integrity, judicial malfeasance, information control, financial influence, privatized election operations, seditious conspiracy, weaponization of government, and foreign interference. Seven methodological rules govern the analysis.

Executive action is defined broadly. Executive orders and bill signings are the most legible instruments, but they are not the only ones and often not the most consequential. This inventory gives equal standing to presidential proclamations and memoranda, national security presidential memoranda, declassification directives, agency rulemaking, grant conditions, litigation posture, personnel and clearance decisions, sanctions designations, terrorist-organization designations, and sustained public messaging. Where an outcome followed presidential advocacy, the President is credited with the messaging effort even where he had no direct legal authority over the result — congressional redistricting being the clearest case.

Messaging is treated as an instrument of deterrence, not as noise. Statements by the President, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation about election crimes carry deterrent weight independent of whether any given prosecution follows. A public warning that election officers who knowingly retain ineligible registrants "could be subject to criminal liability" changes the risk calculus of every official who receives it. This assessment rates that deterrent effect on its own terms.

Unproven allegations are treated as potential rather than dismissed. Where an allegation of election malfeasance has not been adjudicated, it is carried forward as a potential condition and evaluated for what administration action does to deter or expose it. The analysis distinguishes the



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evidentiary posture of each item — document text, official characterization, independent response — without using the absence of a conviction as grounds to discard the underlying risk.

Countervailing evidence is carried in full and then tempered. Every section that credits an administration action also states the contrary record — the injunction, the dismissal, the quashed subpoena, the unreleased report, the absent charge. Those adverse outcomes are then evaluated for cause rather than treated as verdicts on the merits. Where the adverse outcome traces to a government actor's obstruction, neglect of a statutory duty, or refusal to produce records — an expired limitations period following five years of non-production, a statewide voter file withheld, a completed technical examination not released, a directed report never made public, an agency stripped of the quorum needed to act — that attribution is stated. The distinction this document maintains is between an action that failed on its merits and an action that failed because the institutions holding the evidence did not disclose it. A second requirement follows from that and is applied without exception. Every countervailing fact in this document was produced by an institution, and several of those institutions are themselves named in the ten attack vectors as instruments of interference. A ruling is therefore read against Vector 04, an absence of coverage or a platform action against Vector 05, a private intermediary's defense of its own conduct against Vector 07, a prosecution or an investigative closure against Vector 09, and an intelligence finding against Vector 10. This is not a licence to discount adverse evidence, and it is not applied as one: the adverse evidence is stated first and at its strongest in every section. It is a requirement that adverse evidence be attributed to its source and that the source's own position in the vector map be disclosed, so that a ruling by a court whose posture the assessment elsewhere questions, or a denial by a custodian whose non-production the assessment elsewhere scores, is not silently presented to the reader as a neutral measurement.

Media drag. The sixth rating dimension is scored to a stricter evidentiary standard than the other five, because the available evidence is weaker. Judicial drag can be read off a docket, state drag off a statute, and internal drag off a separation count. Media drag has no comparable register. There is no neutral academic content analysis of coverage of this administration for 2025 or 2026; the only quantified tone figures in existence are produced by a movement organization, and they are identified as such wherever they appear. The dimension is therefore scored on four classes of evidence that can be verified independently: documented carriage and distribution decisions, published platform ranking policy, nonpartisan survey measurement of public belief, and peer-reviewed research on the transmission of public opinion into judicial output. Allegation unsupported by one of those four is excluded, and the section in Part III states plainly which propositions rest on which class.



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Organization. Part I is organized by acting institution rather than by instrument type, beginning with the President and proceeding through the Department of Justice, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of War, the Department of Homeland Security and its components, and the remaining departments and independent agencies. Part II scores the same body of action against the ten attack vectors.

Rating scale. Six dimensions, each 0 to 10:

Dimension	Meaning	Direction
E — Effort	Volume, seriousness, and reach of administration action on the vector	Higher is more
J — Judicial drag	Degree to which courts have blocked, narrowed, or voided that action	Higher is worse
I — Internal drag	Degree to which federal personnel, vacancies, or capacity loss impeded execution	Higher is worse
S — State drag	Degree to which state and local officials resisted or nullified the action	Higher is worse
M — Media drag	Degree to which press coverage and platform distribution conditions denied the action the public assent on which its legal and legislative survival depends	Higher is worse
X — Net effectiveness	Realistic hardening actually delivered before November 3, 2026	Higher is better

3 Part I — Inventory of executive actions

3.1 President Trump

Part I is organized by the institution that issued each instrument, beginning with the President himself. Any action that does not sit within a single department is placed here, because the President is the constitutional author of executive action and the originating authority for every instrument catalogued below. Three categories are collected under his name directly: the presidential instruments bearing a direct election nexus, the instruments whose effect is generational rather than departmental, and the communication practice that this assessment treats as executive action in its own right.



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3.1.1 Presidential instruments with a direct election nexus

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14148, Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders — §2(aa) revokes EO 14019, Promoting Access to Voting, which had directed all federal agencies into voter-registration activity	90 FR 8237	Jan 20, 2025	Operational; self-executing revocation
EO 14152, Holding Former Government Officials Accountable for Election Interference and Improper Disclosure of Sensitive Governmental Information — revokes clearances of the 51 signers of the Hunter Biden letter	90 FR 8343	Jan 20, 2025	Operational
Presidential Memorandum, Immediate Declassification of Crossfire Hurricane Materials	whitehouse.gov	Mar 25, 2025	Executed; binder released to Congress Apr 9, 2025
EO 14248, Preserving and Protecting the Integrity of American Elections — documentary proof of citizenship on the federal form, ballot-receipt deadlines, equipment standards	90 FR 14005	Mar 25, 2025	Core provisions struck down in three district courts
EO 14399, Ensuring Citizenship Verification and Integrity in Federal Elections	91 FR 17125 ; whitehouse.gov	Mar 31, 2026	§3 enjoined D. Mass. Aug 11, 2026; injunction as to §§2–3 stayed by the Supreme Court Aug 24, 2026
EO 14395, Establishing the Task Force to Eliminate Fraud	91 FR 13485	Mar 2026	Operational
Continuation of the national emergency declared in EO 13848, Imposing Certain Sanctions in the Event of Foreign Interference in a United States Election	91 FR 56547	Aug 29, 2025	Extended through Sept 12, 2027
Proclamation 10989, pardons for 2020 alternate electors and related persons	90 FR 51071	Nov 2025	Executed
Presidential Memorandum restricting federal grantee lobbying	90 FR 42691	Aug 28, 2025	Operational

Citizenship, immigration, and enrollment integrity



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Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14160, Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship	90 FR 8449	Jan 20, 2025	Held unconstitutional, <i>Trump v. Barbara</i> , June 30, 2026
EO 14418, successor citizenship order	91 FR 51991	Aug 6, 2026	TRO denied Aug 28, 2026; preliminarily enjoined as to a certified class, D. Md., Sept 2, 2026
EO 14419, Ending Birth Tourism	91 FR 51993	Aug 6, 2026	In force; TRO denied Aug 28, 2026
EO 14411, Strengthening Customs Enforcement	91 FR 35125	June 2026	Operational

Financial system and fraud

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14406, Restoring Integrity to the Financial System	91 FR 30479	May 2026	Operational
EO 14331, Guaranteeing Fair Banking for All Americans	90 FR 38925	Aug 2025	Operational
EO 14412, Securing the Nation Against Cryptographic Attacks	91 FR 38483	June 2026	Operational; long-horizon
Rescissions Act of 2025	P.L. 119-28	July 24, 2025	Enacted; \$8.973 billion cancelled

Hemispheric and foreign-actor measures

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14157, Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations	90 FR 8439	Jan 20, 2025	Operational; designations executed
EO 14362, designating the Muslim Brotherhood chapters as FTOs	90 FR 55033	Nov 2025	Operational
EO 14382, Addressing Threats to the United States by the Government of Iran	91 FR 6493	Feb 2026	Operational
EO 14380, Cuba measures	91 FR 5085	Feb 2026	Operational
EO 14404, Cuba sanctions expansion	91 FR 25061	Apr 2026	Operational



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Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
Reissuance of NSPM-5, Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba	90 FR 38913	Aug 2025	Operational

The Cuba and Venezuela measures matter to the election-integrity record for a specific reason: the electronic voting manipulation capability documented in the declassified intelligence traces to the Venezuelan state and its Cuban intelligence partnership. Constraining that partnership is a direct action against the capability, not a collateral one. The declassified CIA note of June 29, 2026 summarizes intelligence reporting from 2004 through 2020 on Venezuela's electronic voting manipulation capabilities, including a 2006 National Intelligence Council assessment of the Smartmatic acquisition of Sequoia and a September 2020 report on a virtual-machine hash-substitution technique. The note carries its own caveats: the intelligence community "did not definitively confirm that large-scale electronic fraud was successfully executed," and the product "was not coordinated within the Intelligence Community."

Domestic threat designations and institutional accountability

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
Executive order designating Antifa as a domestic terrorist organization — an unnumbered presidential order, not a numbered EO	90 FR 46317	Sept 22, 2025	Operational; designation authority contested
NSPM-7, Countering Domestic Terrorism and Organized Political Violence	90 FR 47225	Sept 2025	Operational
EO 14282, addressing foreign influence at American universities	90 FR 17541	Apr 2025	Operational
EO 14263, Addressing Risks from Susman Godfrey	90 FR 15615	Apr 9, 2025	Declared null and void and permanently enjoined June 27, 2025

Four law-firm orders of this type were permanently enjoined. The consolidated appeal was argued in the D.C. Circuit on May 14, 2026 and remains undecided. The practical result is that this line of action produced no enforceable legal effect, though it produced substantial signaling effect within the litigation bar.



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3.1.2 Birthright citizenship and the long-horizon electorate

This is the instrument with the longest time constant in the entire inventory and the least effect on November 3, 2026. EO 14160 of January 20, 2025 directed federal agencies to withhold recognition of citizenship for children born to parents unlawfully present or lawfully present only temporarily. The litigation ran from district-court injunctions in early 2025 through *Trump v. CASA* on June 27, 2025, which addressed the availability of universal injunctions rather than the merits, to certiorari before judgment on December 5, 2025, argument on April 1, 2026, and decision on **June 30, 2026** in *Trump v. Barbara*, where the Court affirmed the District of New Hampshire and held the order unconstitutional ([opinion](#)).

The administration's response was to narrow rather than abandon. **EO 14419, Ending Birth Tourism**, signed August 6, 2026, addresses entry for the purpose of giving birth ([White House](#)). **EO 14418**, signed the same day, denies federal documentation of citizenship in enumerated circumstances where neither parent is a citizen — commercial transactions to be present for birth, commercial surrogacy, fraud, foreign-government employment, and status as an "alien enemy" defined to include members of designated foreign terrorist organizations ([White House](#)). That last category is the connective tissue to the cartel designations of February 20, 2025 and is the most legally innovative provision in the set. A temporary restraining order was denied on August 28, 2026 ([Al Jazeera](#)), but on **September 2, 2026** the District of Maryland preliminarily enjoined the order as applied to a certified class in *Casa Inc. v. Trump*, holding the carveouts "well outside the narrow exceptions to birthright citizenship recognized by the Supreme Court" while declining to bar agencies from issuing implementing guidance ([Fragomen](#)).

The electoral significance is real and is generational, not immediate. A person born in 2026 votes in 2044. Nothing in this line of instruments changes the composition of the 2026 or 2028 electorate. What it does change, if it survives, is the rate at which unlawful presence converts into citizenship and therefore into franchise across the following two decades — and, because United States-born minor children are counted in the apportionment base immediately regardless of when they vote, it also interacts with the census dimension on a much shorter clock than the franchise dimension. The honest score is high effort, high judicial drag, and near-zero net effectiveness before November 3, 2026, and that is how it is carried in the vector ratings.



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3.1.3 Public broadcasting and media-accountability instruments

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14290, Ending Taxpayer Subsidization of Biased Media — directs the Corporation for Public Broadcasting board to cease direct funding to NPR and PBS and to eliminate indirect funding through licensees	whitehouse.gov	May 1, 2025	Held unconstitutional and permanently enjoined in <i>NPR v. Trump</i> ; the appropriations rescission is unaffected
Rescission of Corporation for Public Broadcasting appropriations	NPR	July 2025	\$1.1 billion rescinded; the Corporation's board dissolved the organization January 5, 2026

The order's findings state that "Government funding of news media in this environment is not only outdated and unnecessary but corrosive to the appearance of journalistic independence," and that "neither entity presents a fair, accurate, or unbiased portrayal of current events to taxpaying citizens" ([EO 14290](#)). The legal and the fiscal instruments diverged, and the fiscal one prevailed. Judge Randolph Moss held the order unconstitutional and entered a permanent injunction, but the ruling does not restore appropriated funds ([NPR](#)). Congress had already rescinded \$1.1 billion, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting board formally dissolved the organization on January 5, 2026 ([NPR](#)). On May 27, 2026 NPR laid off ten journalists, accepted at least eighteen buyouts and left eight positions unfilled — about 4 percent of its content division — against a \$15 million drop in member-station fees ([NPR](#)).

The editorial-bias premise of the order intersects this assessment at one specific point. The Global Disinformation Index, funded by the Global Engagement Center, rated NPR among the outlets least likely to spread disinformation while placing dissenting outlets at elevated risk. A federally subsidized broadcaster and a federally subsidized credibility-rating apparatus were, in that instance, mutually reinforcing: the government paid for the ratings and paid for one of the outlets the ratings favored. Removing the appropriation removes one side of that circuit.

3.1.4 Messaging as executive action

The President's July 16, 2026 address to the nation is the highest-leverage single communications act in the record. Verified text includes "mail-in ballots are inherently corrupt... you would have no mail-in ballots except for illness, disability, military deployment, or travel"; "Tonight, I'm announcing the immediate declassification and release of critical intelligence revealing shocking vulnerabilities in our



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election infrastructure"; "Congress must pass the Save America Act... all voters must show photo voter ID... All voters must provide proof of citizenship"; and "I've also ordered DHS to notify every state about non-citizens on their voter rolls and direct them to remove all ineligible voters" ([Miller Center transcript](#)).

On August 5, 2026 the President posted that "Wayne County (Detroit) in Michigan is one of the most corrupt voting areas in the United States, if not the World... In November we must VOTE FOR MIKE ROGERS, and make Michigan TOO BIG TO RIG" ([Truth Social archive](#)). On August 17, 2026 he cited India's photo-identification requirement and sub-one-percent mail voting in support of the SAVE America Act ([Guardian](#)).

Two announced instruments were never signed: the executive order to "put an end to mail-in ballots" announced August 18, 2025 ([NPR](#)), and a similar order announced August 18, 2026. What issued instead, seven months after the first announcement, was EO 14399 — narrower than the announced ban.

One further instance of presidential messaging is treated in Part III rather than here, because its significance is evidentiary rather than deterrent: the September 3, 2026 post concerning the Fox Business anchor Maria Bartiromo, which is the occasion for the only directly documented editorial instruction in the record limiting coverage of the July 16, 2026 address.

3.1.5 Redistricting advocacy

The President has no legal authority over congressional district lines. He is nonetheless credited here with the messaging campaign, because state officials on both sides of the ledger explicitly attributed their conduct to it.

Texas is the clearest documented chain. Governor Greg Abbott was initially resistant and White House staff outreach failed; "Trump then called Abbott," after which Abbott placed redistricting on the special-session agenda, two days after Dhillon's letter asserting four Texas districts were unconstitutional. Representative Troy Nehls credited the President directly ([Texas Tribune](#)). Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe called a special session for August 29, 2025 ([Missouri governor's office](#)). In North Carolina, Senate leader Phil Berger said "We are doing everything possible to uphold President Trump's agenda," though he later denied any deal. In Indiana, after the Senate leadership refused, the President posted that any Republican voting against redistricting "should be primaried," and Governor Mike Braun, following a phone call, said "Now I am left with no choice other than to explore all options at my disposal to compel the State Senate to show up and vote" ([NOTUS](#)). That is a



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documented instance of a state official changing his stated position after direct presidential contact. Ohio Speaker Matt Huffman and a Kansas legislator publicly refused.

Combined with *Louisiana v. Callais*, decided 6–3 on April 29, 2026, which rewrote Voting Rights Act § 2, the net partisan effect of the 2025–2026 redistricting cycle is approximately R+8 to R+10, with competitive seats falling from 87 to 77.

3.1.6 Public communication practice: open signings, press access, and the autopen contrast

This assessment counts messaging as an instrument, and the *manner* of communication is part of the instrument. Three measurable features of this administration's practice bear on the election-integrity record, and one widely repeated claim about it cannot be substantiated and is not asserted here.

Volume of signed, published, attributable instruments. The Federal Register's official tally records **271 executive orders** signed across 2025 and 2026 — 225 in 2025 (EO 14147 through EO 14371) and 46 in 2026 through EO 14417 — against **162** for the preceding administration across four years and **220** in this President's first term ([Office of the Federal Register](#)). Every one of those instruments carries a signature, a date, a Federal Register citation, and an identified author. That is the relevant property for an election-integrity assessment: an instrument that is published and attributable can be litigated, audited, and rescinded, and the person who signed it can be held politically accountable for it.

Press exposure. Counts maintained by Martha Joynt Kumar of the White House Transition Project record **129 interchanges with reporters in the first 100 days** of the second term — 98 short question-and-answer sessions, 5 press conferences, and 26 interviews, at 1.9 per workday — against 87 for the preceding administration and 89 in this President's first term ([White House Transition Project](#)). Kumar's data for the full first year show **at least 493 press interactions**, comprising 153 interviews, 327 short question-and-answer sessions, and 13 formal press conferences, against **266** interactions and 10 formal press conferences in the preceding administration's first year ([New York Post, reporting Kumar's data](#)). For a report card that treats messaging as deterrence, exposure of this magnitude is the delivery mechanism: an assertion about election crime made in an unscripted exchange in front of a hostile press corps reaches further and is harder to walk back than one made in a written release.

The autopen contrast. The contrast this administration draws is with the use of a mechanical signature device by its predecessor, and the contrast is a documented executive action rather than a



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rhetorical one. The Presidential Memorandum "**Reviewing Certain Presidential Actions**" of **June 4, 2025** directed the Attorney General and the Counsel to the President to investigate whether aides used an autopen "to conceal Biden's cognitive decline and assert Article II authority," reciting that more than **1,200 presidential documents** were issued during that presidency, that **235 judges** were appointed, and that **37 of 40** federal death sentences were commuted two days before Christmas 2024 ([White House](#)). The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform released "**The Biden Autopen Presidency**" on **October 28, 2025**, resting on **14 depositions and transcribed interviews totaling nearly 47 hours**, and referred the matter to the Attorney General and, as to the White House physician, to the D.C. Board of Medicine; Chairman James Comer concluded that "executive actions performed by Biden White House staff and signed by autopen are null and void" ([House Oversight](#)). In December 2025 the President declared such actions "terminated" ([Government Executive](#)).

Countervailing, and the tempering the record requires. Comer's "null and void" conclusion is a committee assertion, not a judicial holding; Committee Democrats released a conflicting report the same day; and no court has passed on the purported December 2025 termination ([CNN](#)). Nor does this assessment repeat the claim that this President signs an unusually high share of his orders in public or televised ceremonies: **no source counts televised signing ceremonies for this or any prior administration**, and the claim is therefore not made. What is documented is the aggregate volume of signed, published instruments and the aggregate volume of press exposure, and those are what this section credits. Press access has also been restricted in at least one documented instance — the Associated Press was excluded from the press pool on **February 11, 2025** ([White House Transition Project](#)). But the unresolved status of the autopen question is itself a transparency failure of the responsible institutions rather than a weakness in the inquiry: the Justice Department has not acted on a congressional referral that is now nearly a year old, and no fetched record shows any agency of government establishing who exercised Article II authority over 1,200 documents. An unanswered question of that magnitude is evidence of non-production, not of absence.

3.2 Department of Justice

The Justice Department is the agency with the most election-specific statutory authority in the executive branch and the agency whose record in this period is the most sharply divided between volume of activity and delivered result. Its instruments are letters, civil suits, grand jury process, monitors, and personnel decisions. The pattern across all of them is that the demand was made, the litigation was filed, and the courts declined — and, as set out below, a material part of the reason the courts declined is that the records the Department sought had been withheld, unproduced, or allowed



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to age past their limitations period by the state and local custodians who held them and by the Department's own prior leadership.

3.2.1 The July 7, 2026 letters and voter-roll litigation

The July 7, 2026 letters. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhillon wrote to election officials in all fifty states and the District of Columbia with a five-day response deadline. The operative language: "Any election officer, including the chief election officer of the state, who knowingly retains noncitizens on the state's SVRL or facilitates noncitizens in receiving and casting ballots could be subject to criminal liability," and "An intentional act that is aimed at diluting the votes of citizens could also constitute a violation" ([NOTUS](#); [Votebeat](#)). A four-page memorandum on the Civil Rights Act, Voting Rights Act, National Voter Registration Act, and Help America Vote Act accompanied the letters, including aiding-and-abetting exposure.

Voter-roll litigation. The Department has sued thirty states. As of April 21, 2026 eighteen states had consented or indicated plans to provide data, and the Department reported examining sixty million voter records, identifying 350,000 deceased persons and 25,000 lacking proof of citizenship ([Reuters](#)). As of August 7, 2026 the Department had lost twenty-one consecutive cases ([Reuters](#)).

Monitors. Roughly one thousand monitors are planned for November 3, against 714 in 2024 and 289 in 2022. An August 25, 2026 release describes "over 80 monitors across seven states and over 200 polling locations." Fifteen jurisdictions across six states were covered in the 2026 primary season.

3.2.2 Grand jury activity

Grand jury activity. Joseph diGenova, counselor to the Attorney General, is running a Fort Pierce grand jury in the Southern District of Florida with 130 to 150 or more subpoenas issued; 18 U.S.C. § 241 is the only viable statute and limitations have run on 2016 conduct. No indictment has issued. Dan Bishop, appointed Special Attorney to the Attorney General and U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of North Carolina, has approximately 260 FBI analysts working 600 boxes of Fulton County material. No arrests.

3.2.3 The Public Integrity Section

The Public Integrity Section: what was actually reduced, and why. The conventional framing treats the contraction of the Public Integrity Section as a loss of election-crime enforcement capacity. The Section's own governing document supports the opposite reading, and it is worth setting out precisely because it is the mechanism by which federal election-fraud investigation was suppressed rather than enabled.



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The controlling text is *Federal Prosecution of Election Offenses*, Eighth Edition, December 2017, edited by Richard C. Pilger, then Director of the Election Crimes Branch of the Public Integrity Section. The Eighth Edition carries forward the policy architecture institutionalized during the tenure of Jack Smith, who served as Chief of the Public Integrity Section for approximately five years ending in 2015 — a fact confirmed by his own congressional witness biography, which states that "For five years before that, Mr. Smith served as the Chief of the U.S. Department of Justice's Public Integrity Section" ([House Judiciary Committee](#)). Precision matters here and the distinction is stated rather than blurred: Smith is not named in the Eighth Edition's preface, which credits Pilger and prior authors. The accurate claim is that the Section under his chieftaincy enforced and entrenched these policies and that the 2017 manual carries them forward — not that he drafted the document.

What the manual does is decisive regardless of authorship. Under the heading "**FEDERAL ROLE: PROSECUTION, NOT INTERVENTION**," it instructs that "it is the general policy of the Department not to conduct overt investigations, including interviews with individual voters, until after the outcome of the election allegedly affected by the fraud is certified," and that "In most cases, election-related documents should not be taken from the custody of local election administrators until the election to which they pertain has been certified and the time for contesting the election results has expired." Under the consultation policy at United States Attorneys' Manual § 9-85.210, consultation with the Public Integrity Section is **required** before a United States Attorney may expand beyond a preliminary investigation, interview voters before or after an election, issue a subpoena or a search warrant, present evidence to a grand jury, file a criminal charge, or present an indictment.

Read together, those two rules are a complete gate. Ninety-three United States Attorneys could not subpoena a record, seize a ballot, empanel a grand jury, or charge an election offense without the assent of one Washington office — and were separately instructed to take no overt step until after the contested election was certified and the contest window had closed, by which time the evidence is in the custody of the officials whose conduct is at issue and the statutory preservation period has begun to run. The predictable output of that design is not vigorous federal election-fraud enforcement. It is a near-absence of it, which is precisely what the historical charging record shows. A section that functioned as a veto point over every election-fraud matter in the country, and that used the veto to defer everything past the point of remedy, is not a capacity being lost when it shrinks; it is an obstruction being removed. That is the most defensible rationale for the reductions, and it is a rationale about institutional function rather than headcount.

What actually happened to the Section. The Section fell from more than thirty attorneys to roughly five, with projections as low as two or three, following at least twenty-eight departures; the



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acting chief resigned January 20, 2025, and on March 11, 2025 the Section was told it would bring no new prosecutions. Critically for the mechanism described above, **the consultation requirement itself was suspended in early May 2025** ([Reuters investigation](#)). Removing the gate is the substantive act; the headcount reduction is downstream of it. The Section also canceled its election-integrity trainings and removed the manual from the Department website ([Spotlight PA](#)), and the FY2026 budget cut nineteen positions ([DOJ budget summary](#)). A June 8, 2026 oversight letter objects that the Section was cut "from 36 to two" and that the manual was removed "without explanation," citing pages 8 and 84–85 and the August 20, 2020 Amundson Memorandum ([Senate letter](#)).

Two honest qualifications. Removing a gatekeeper increases prosecutorial discretion in both directions; the same suspension that clears the way for election-fraud investigation also removes a check on politically motivated charging, and this assessment does not pretend otherwise. And the Section is now too small to *conduct* complex multi-district election investigations itself, which is why the diGenova and Bishop grand juries were stood up as special-attorney vehicles outside the Section rather than within it. On July 22, 2026 the House Judiciary Committee referred Jack Smith to the Department for criminal prosecution over a December 17, 2025 deposition ([House Judiciary](#)). A referral is an accusation, not an adjudication, and is recorded here as such.

Separately, the Attorney General dissolved the FBI's Foreign Influence Task Force on **February 5, 2025**, a body whose 2020-cycle conduct is central to Vector 05 ([CBS News](#)).

3.2.4 Documented instances of noncitizen voting

The assessment method of this report card treats unadjudicated allegations as potential rather than dismissed. It does not treat allegations as convictions. This subsection therefore separates the two categories explicitly, because the distinction is what makes the finding usable.

Adjudicated federal convictions. Denis Bouchard, a 70-year-old Canadian citizen, pleaded guilty to two counts under 18 U.S.C. § 1015(f) and was sentenced to two months in prison and one year of supervised release for voting in nine federal elections between 2004 and 2024 ([DOJ, E.D.N.C.](#)). Three noncitizens — Moises Lima Junior, Gordon Louis, and Roberto Figueredo — were convicted of illegal voting and related federal election offenses in the Southern District of Florida and sentenced between February and May ([DOJ, S.D. Fla.](#)). Ukrainian citizens were separately charged in South Florida for illegally voting in 2024 ([DOJ, S.D. Fla.](#)), and nineteen aliens were charged with voter fraud in North Carolina following an ICE investigation into the 2016 elections ([ICE](#)). These are real cases with real dispositions, and the frequently repeated assertion that noncitizen voting has never been prosecuted is false.



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State charges arising directly from a state agency's own referrals. On August 13, 2026 the Michigan Attorney General charged five noncitizens and one United States citizen in connection with voting in the 2024 elections, including counts under MCL 168.933A, MCL 168.932a(c), MCL 168.499(1), and MCL 168.519, with the citizen defendant charged with Election Forgery under MCL 168.933a(a) and Using a Computer to Commit a Crime under MCL 752.797(3)(d) ([Michigan Attorney General](#)). The referral arithmetic in that same release is the material fact: of 38 referrals from the Department of State, six were charged, ten were closed without charges, and twenty-two remain under review. The voter-roll-integrity subsection of Vector 01 sets out why ten were closed, and the reason is statutory immunity rather than absence of conduct.

The China nexus in the voting cases is documented in one instance and is worth stating precisely. Haoxiang Gao, a national of the People's Republic of China and a University of Michigan student, was charged under Michigan law with illegally voting in the 2024 election, released on a \$5,000 personal bond after surrendering his passport, and **fled to Shanghai on January 19, 2025**; a federal complaint for flight to avoid prosecution was unsealed May 30, 2025 ([DOJ, E.D. Mich.](#); [Votebeat](#)). No conviction has been adjudicated because the defendant is outside the jurisdiction. That a foreign national cast a ballot in a battleground state and then left the country rather than face trial is a documented failure of the front-end control this administration's instruments are aimed at.

Referral volumes at the state level, correctly characterized. Ohio's Secretary of State referred 597 suspected noncitizens to the state Attorney General out of more than eight million registrants, of whom 138 had voted and 459 had registered only, and forwarded roughly 1,200 cases to the Justice Department on October 28, 2025 after local prosecutors declined to act ([Associated Press](#); [Statehouse News Bureau](#)). Texas opened investigations into 33 noncitizens flagged through SAVE for voting in 2024 ([Texas Attorney General](#)). Georgia's 2022 citizenship audit identified 1,634 noncitizens who **attempted** to register ([Georgia Secretary of State](#)).

The countervailing finding, carried in full because omitting it would forfeit the argument. Every large number in this area has shrunk under audit, and the pattern is consistent enough that it must be reported as a finding rather than as an objection. Georgia's audit found 1,634 attempted registrations and **zero ballots cast** ([Georgia Secretary of State](#)). Iowa's initial figure of 2,176 was revised to 277 and then to 35 who cast counted ballots ([Center for Election Innovation and Research](#)). Michigan's own systemwide audit compared 7.9 million driving records against 7.2 million active registrations and identified sixteen apparent noncitizens who cast a 2024 ballot — 0.00028 percent of votes cast (same tracker). In Denton County, Texas, of 84 SAVE-flagged records, fourteen



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belonged to citizens and fourteen to self-identified noncitizens **registered in error by government agencies** (same tracker). USCIS itself reported that only 0.03 percent of records run through SAVE merited additional review. The Census Bureau's own August 2026 record-linkage study — the most aggressive federal estimate in existence — found more than 24,000 voter records linked to noncitizen status out of roughly 160 million, or about 0.015 percent, and expressly labels itself "A Beginning Analysis" with more than 32 million records unexamined ([Census Bureau](#)).

The correct reading of that record, and it is not the dismissive one. The audits establish that noncitizen voting is not occurring at a scale that decides national elections, and this document says so plainly. They establish something else at the same time, which is more relevant to an infrastructure assessment: in the cases that survive audit, the dominant documented cause is **not** an alien deceiving the system but a **government agency enrolling an ineligible person by administrative default** — which is precisely the Denton County finding, precisely the Michigan mechanism set out in the voter-roll-integrity subsection of Vector 01, and precisely what a front-end documentary-proof requirement is designed to prevent. A defect that produces small numbers today at an enrollment rate of hundreds of thousands per year in a single state is a control failure regardless of its current yield, and it is scored here as a control failure rather than as a vote-count problem.

3.2.5 NVRA and HAVA compliance enforcement

Separate from the demand letters and the statewide-file litigation, the Department has brought affirmative list-accuracy enforcement under the National Voter Registration Act and the Help America Vote Act. This is the narrowest and most legally conventional part of its election program, and it is also the only part with an unambiguous win.

North Carolina, and the one clear success. On **May 27, 2025** the Department sued the State of North Carolina and the State Board of Elections for failure to maintain an accurate voter list in violation of HAVA, alleging that the state had used a registration form that did not require a driver's license number or the last four digits of a Social Security number and that voters added without those identifiers remained on the rolls. Assistant Attorney General Harmeet K. Dhillon: "The Department of Justice will not hesitate to file suit against jurisdictions that maintain inaccurate voter registration rolls in violation of federal voting laws" ([Justice Department](#)). A **consent order** was entered and announced on **September 9, 2025**; the Department stated that at least **100,000 voters** lacked the required identifying information when the suit was filed ([Justice Department](#); [North Carolina State Board of Elections](#)). This is the single instance in the entire record in which the Department identified a quantified, state-admitted defect in a statewide registration record and obtained a court-ordered remedy for it.



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Orange County, California. In *United States v. Page*, No. 8:25-cv-01370 (C.D. Cal.), filed **June 25, 2025**, the Department sued the Orange County Registrar of Voters for refusing to provide records on the removal of noncitizens from the voter list and for failure to maintain an accurate list. Dhillon: "Voting by non-citizens is a federal crime, and states and counties that refuse to disclose all requested voter information are in violation of well-established federal elections laws" ([Justice Department](#)). The case remains pending; county supervisors voted against settling ([Voice of OC](#)).

Statements of interest in private litigation. The Department filed statements of interest on the NVRA's reasonable-effort list-maintenance requirement in *Judicial Watch v. Illinois State Board of Elections* ([Justice Department](#)) and in *Judicial Watch v. Reed*, No. 6:24-cv-1783 (D. Or.) ([Justice Department](#)). Neither has produced a merits ruling in the period assessed.

The comparative point, which is the substantive one. The Department's own published NVRA case list records that in 2024 it sued the Commonwealth of Virginia under the NVRA's quiet-period provision and sued the State of Alabama, obtaining a **preliminary injunction on October 16, 2024** that ordered Alabama to *stop* its removal program until after the November 2024 general election ([Justice Department, Civil Rights Division](#)). The same statute, administered by the same Department, was used in 2024 to prevent list maintenance and in 2025 and 2026 to compel it. That inversion is the single clearest documented instance in this record of federal election-law enforcement tracking the preferences of the administration in office rather than the text of the statute, and it is relevant in both directions: it substantiates the neglect-of-duty finding assessed under Vector 09, and it is the strongest available argument that the current posture is equally contingent.

3.3 Office of the Director of National Intelligence

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence is, on the evidence in this record, the most consequential single actor in the administration's election-security program, and the one whose activity has drawn the least attention relative to its effect. It holds three distinct instruments: declassification, technical examination of voting equipment, and control of access to classified information.

3.3.1 The declassification program

This is the single largest new instrument in the inventory, and it did not exist in any prior administration's playbook.

Volume. As of August 28, 2026 the White House Government Transparency Task Force has published eleven ZIP archives plus one loose PDF on its election-integrity page, totaling **562 pages** by



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direct measurement of the downloaded files. The four packages released alongside the President's prime-time address of July 16, 2026 account for exactly **269 pages** and 74.0 megabytes — a figure matching the count reported by the [Wall Street Journal](#). All of it is posted at whitehouse.gov/election-integrity.

The July 16, 2026 packages.

Package	Pages	Core content
Vulnerabilities in Electronic Voting and Ballot-Counting Systems	37	CIA note on Venezuelan electronic voting manipulation capability, 2004–2020; NICM of Jan 15, 2020 on 2020 infrastructure vulnerabilities; CISA election report
China's Acquisition and Exploitation of American Voter Data	167	Task Force states statement; the "200M Voter Records Compromised" document; NSA email chain of Nov 20, 2020; FBI counter-email of Dec 30, 2020
Michigan Voter Registration Investigation	53	FBI case file 56D-DE-3407960 (Detroit): four-year timeline, GBI Strategies material, Public Integrity Section declination, witness memos, voter-fraud spreadsheet
Noncitizens on State Voter Rolls	12	DHS-derived state-level noncitizen registration analysis

The August 2026 second wave added 293 pages: Oxford Comma (FBI opening EC of May 16, 2017 on whether the President "may be or has been, wittingly or unwittingly, involved in activities for or on behalf of the Government of the Russian Federation"); the Maricopa County Data Breach file (FBI case 288A-PX-3341832, documenting exfiltration of approximately 633,000 voter-registration records between October 21 and November 2, 2020, roughly 930 of them sensitive, with a confession obtained and declinations by four separate prosecuting authorities); MARCH TOLL (the 2017 preliminary investigation of the sitting Attorney General); Round River (the ODNI DELTA Project deck documenting an FBI Foreign Influence Task Force group formed around December 2019 that flagged source reporting on Burisma and Zlochevsky as Russian disinformation, and whose own deck concedes "The Round River team did not corroborate any of the allegations of the 'Ukraine Narrative'"); RUSTY THUMBS; DHS Election Integrity Memoranda; and an NSA report.

Prior ODNI releases under Director Tulsi Gabbard, February 2025 through June 30, 2026, include Release 15-25 (July 18, 2025, pre-election 2016 intelligence judgments, the December 7, 2016 Clapper talking points, and the tasking email for a new assessment "per the President's request"), Release 18-25 (July 23, 2025, the declassified September 2020 House Permanent Select Committee majority staff oversight report), Release 19-25 (July 30, 2025, an intelligence community whistleblower account of



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pressure to concur in the 2017 assessment), Release 22-25 (August 13, 2025, the Clapper email chain containing "That's OUR story, and we're stickin' to it"), and Release 06-26. ODNI's own transparency hub records revocation of clearances for 37 individuals tied to the 2017 assessment and a 40 percent workforce reduction ([ODNI Transparency](#)).

Documented against asserted. Three specific gaps are worth stating plainly, because they determine how much weight the program can carry in litigation or before a grand jury. The document text on Chinese acquisition reads "Unspecified U.S. voter data — 204,822,241 records (45 GB) — 2016," describing data an actor was "in possession of a document as of 2019" listing as *likely* leaked or compromised; the public characterization was 220 million records illicitly acquired. The Task Force states statement concedes that not all eighteen states are identified by name and in fact names fifteen states plus the District of Columbia. The NSA line "We have deliberately massaged our one pending PDB to avoid any direct links to the election" refers to one pending briefing item during assessment drafting. Officials in twelve of the fifteen named states said federal authorities never notified them of a breach ([Election Law Blog summarizing the Washington Post](#)), and Ohio's Secretary of State characterized the underlying data as publicly available and "not a breach of any kind" ([Statehouse News Bureau](#)).

Statutory reporting gap. The report required by 50 U.S.C. § 3371a(b) identifying election-security vulnerabilities and assessing foreign intelligence threats to federal elections was due no later than 180 days before the November 2026 election — May 7, 2026 — and had not been provided as of July 2, 2026. The declassified assessment of foreign threats to the 2024 election required by 50 U.S.C. § 3371(c)(3) has never been published ([House Intelligence minority letter, July 2, 2026](#)). This is a real hole: the administration has published 562 pages about past elections while the statutory vulnerability assessment for the coming one is outstanding.

3.3.2 Voting equipment obtained from Puerto Rico, and the technical examination

The action, and the credit it is due. In May 2025 the Office of the Director of National Intelligence obtained electronic voting hardware, software, and data copies from Puerto Rico for technical analysis. ODNI stated that the **U.S. Attorney in Puerto Rico**, his team of **Homeland Security Investigations** agents, and an **FBI supervisory special agent** "facilitated the voluntary turnover of electronic voting hardware and software to ODNI for analysis" ([Reuters](#); [CNN](#)). Director Tulsi Gabbard testified in March 2026 that the request originated with the U.S. Attorney's office in Puerto Rico, identified as **W. Stephen Muldrow** ([Guardian](#)). The equipment was **Dominion Voting Systems** equipment used in Puerto Rico's 2024 elections ([Politico](#)). This is the first instance



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in the record of any federal entity obtaining fielded election equipment and subjecting it to adversarial technical examination outside the certification process, and it deserves to be credited as such: the Election Assistance Commission, which holds the statutory certification authority, had not done it in twenty-three years of existence, and no Voting System Test Laboratory operating under that authority had produced a comparable public finding.

ODNI's own stated findings. ODNI reported that it "found extremely concerning cyber security and operational deployment practices that pose a significant risk to U.S. elections," citing vulnerable cellular and modem configuration and software flaws that could give an attacker access "deep into vital electoral systems," and justified the work under its "broad statutory authority to coordinate, integrate, and analyze intelligence related to election security" ([Reuters](#)).

What the contractor found. The examination was performed by **Mojave Research**, a small Virginia cybersecurity firm led by chief executive **Jason Wareham** and chief technology officer **Manbir Gulati**, engaged through existing technical work for ODNI. Roughly ten people worked the effort over about six weeks beginning in May 2025, and officials asked the firm to scale to about sixty ([Politico](#); [Nextgov](#)). Presenting at the **DEF CON Voting Village on August 7, 2026**, the firm reported **at least a dozen high- or critical-severity software vulnerabilities** in commercial software installed on the system, of which it **successfully executed five**. The specific weaknesses were reused passwords, easily cracked passwords, passwords embedded in software, disabled firewalls, and active cellular modems creating pathways into software believed to be isolated. None of the vulnerabilities was newly discovered; fixes already existed, in some cases well before the election in which the equipment was used ([Nextgov](#)).

The finding on impact, stated in the firm's own words. Wareham: "We found extensive and largely unacceptable weaknesses, but we did not find evidence that those weaknesses were actively exploited or that votes were altered." The presentation slide read: "BOTH CAN BE TRUE: Serious risk can exist without evidence of exploitation or outcome impact" ([Politico](#)).

The tempering the record requires, and it runs in both directions. The Mojave finding of no observed exploitation must be read against two limits and one competing assertion. The limits are scope and evidence-retention. The examination covered **one manufacturer, one system configuration, and one jurisdiction**, over six weeks, and the firm's planned follow-on work on additional systems before the 2026 midterms was **stopped by a stop-work order by October 2025** ([Politico](#)). An examination that is terminated before it reaches the rest of the market cannot support a conclusion about the rest of the market. More importantly, as documented under Vector 02, the audit and logging mechanisms in these systems are self-attesting: CVE-2022-1740 records that



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hash display, audit logs, and protective counters are themselves manipulable. A finding of "no evidence of exploitation" derived from logs that an attacker with the demonstrated access could alter is a statement about the logs, not about the votes. The firm's own formulation — serious risk can exist without evidence of exploitation — concedes precisely this.

The competing assertion, and its evidentiary status. A sworn declaration filed on **September 23, 2025** in *Peters v. Stancil*, No. 1:25-cv-00425-STV (D. Colo.), by a person identified only as a former Venezuelan government official and "National Coordinator" within that country's National Electoral Council from 2003 to 2016, asserts that he configured Smartmatic equipment; that Venezuela used a Smartmatic **"SAES data utility tool"** to emulate machines and inject false votes **without detection**; that transmissions for the state of **Mérida** were falsified; and that Dominion systems share the architectural features — small log files, accessible source code, SAES-style utilities, and remote man-in-the-middle access — that made the Venezuelan manipulation undetectable ([Notice of Filing Sworn Testimony](#)). Under this report card's stated method, that assertion is treated as **potential** rather than dismissed, and its significance is precise: it is a claim that the very absence of evidence Mojave reported is the designed output of the system. If the declarant is correct that the tooling was built to leave no detectable trace, then "we did not find evidence that votes were altered" is exactly what a successful manipulation would produce, and the two statements are not in conflict.

The countervailing record on that assertion, carried in full. The declaration is a pleading exhibit in a case the Tenth Circuit dismissed as moot on **June 17, 2026**; no court in any source located has adopted, tested, or credited it ([Colorado Politics](#)). A judge determined in 2023 that the Dominion–Venezuela conspiracy claim was baseless, and the news organizations that aired it retracted and settled defamation suits at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars ([Guardian](#)). Reuters' sources said the Puerto Rico examination "did not produce any clear evidence of Venezuelan interference," and ODNI denied that the work was linked to Venezuela, stating "our actions were not focused on any specific election" ([Reuters](#)). Most directly, a declassified **June 2006 CIA memorandum** released in the July 2026 tranche concluded that Venezuela and Smartmatic did **not** have the capability to manipulate the outcome of elections outside Venezuela ([CNN](#)).

3.3.3 Security clearance revocations

Access to classified information is the one lever in the entire inventory that the executive branch controls unilaterally, that requires no state cooperation, and that no court has generally disturbed. Five instruments in this period revoked or suspended it from named individuals and from organizations, and every one of them was justified in whole or in part on election-related conduct.



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They are catalogued here because the authority is intelligence-community authority, and their effect is assessed under Vector 05.

January 20, 2025 — Memorandum, "Holding Former Government Officials Accountable for Election Interference and Improper Disclosure of Sensitive Governmental Information," published at **90 FR 8233**. It names **John Brennan, James Clapper, Peter Strzok, Lisa Page, Andrew McCabe, Michael Hayden, Susan Rice, Alexander Vindman, Fiona Hill, and Mark Zaid**, and directs revocation as to the approximately **51 signers of the 2020 laptop letter** and **John Bolton**. The stated finding is that the signers "willfully weaponized the gravitas of the Intelligence Community to manipulate the political process" ([Federal Register](#); [White House](#)). This is the only clearance instrument in the set whose Federal Register citation this assessment was able to verify against the primary document.

February 25, 2025 — Memorandum on Suspension of Security Clearances and Evaluation of Government Contracts, reaching **Covington & Burling LLP** employees involved in work for the former Special Counsel. This is an **organization-level** action rather than an individual one, and the distinction matters: it reaches persons who are identified by employer rather than by conduct ([govinfo](#), [DCPD-202500303](#); [White House fact sheet](#)).

March 2025 — Memorandum, "Rescinding Security Clearances and Access to Classified Information from Specified Individuals," naming **Antony Blinken, Jacob Sullivan, Lisa Monaco, Mark Zaid, Norman Eisen, Letitia James, Alvin Bragg, Andrew Weissmann, Hillary Clinton, Elizabeth Cheney, Kamala Harris, Adam Kinzinger, Fiona Hill, Alexander Vindman, and Joseph R. Biden Jr. and any other member of his family**," on the finding that it is "no longer in the national interest" for them to access classified information ([White House](#)). **The inclusion of Norman Eisen is directly germane to this assessment: he is the author of the democracy-playbook material analyzed elsewhere in this record.**

April 9, 2025 — Presidential Memorandum, "Addressing Risks from Chris Krebs and Government Censorship," revoking the clearance of the former CISA Director and **suspending** clearances held by individuals at associated entities **including SentinelOne**, pending review, and ordering a six-year review of CISA's activities. The stated grounds include suppression of conservative viewpoints and having "falsely and baselessly den[ied] that the 2020 election was rigged and stolen" ([White House](#)). This is the instrument most tightly coupled to the information-control vector, because it reaches the official who ran the federal apparatus at issue. Krebs left SentinelOne in April 2025 amid the dispute ([Reuters](#)).



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August 19, 2025 — an ODNI memorandum by Director Gabbard, stated to be directed by the President, revoking the clearances of **37** current and former national security officials, many of whom had worked on Russian interference and foreign election threats, on stated grounds of "politicization or weaponization of intelligence" and failure to comply with professional analytic tradecraft standards ([Associated Press](#); [New York Times](#)).

Countervailing, and the tempering. One of the named individuals, Mark Zaid, sued in May 2025 and obtained a **preliminary injunction** in the District of Columbia barring enforcement of the March memorandum against him ([PBS NewsHour](#)); that is the one judicial loss in this set, and it is a narrow one. The larger objection is structural: two of the five instruments operate at organization level, reaching people by employer rather than by adjudicated conduct, and none of the five rests on a finding by a tribunal. The record also does not permit a claim that these revocations produced measurable hardening of any election system. What they did produce is documented and is scored under Vector 05: the individuals and firms who built and defended the 2020 information-control apparatus no longer hold the access that made their participation in it possible, and the reason that outcome was available to executive action at all is that it required no court's tolerance and no state's cooperation. Set against the transparency failures catalogued elsewhere in this Part — the withheld voting-equipment report, the unreleased statutory election-security report, the unproduced Fulton County records — the clearance actions are the clearest illustration of the asymmetry this report card measures: what the executive branch could do alone, it did; what required another institution's cooperation, it largely did not obtain.

3.4 Federal Bureau of Investigation

Director Kash Patel said on April 19, 2026: "I can announce on your show that we have all the information we need. We're collaborating with our prosecutors at the Department of Justice under Attorney General Todd Blanche. We are going to make arrests, and it's forthcoming. I assure you, it's coming soon" ([USA Today](#)). Those arrests have not materialized. The Bureau assigned 260 investigative analysts to Fulton County 2020 records ([New York Times](#)) and, per the White House, Patel "was directed to ensure the Michigan matter was fully investigated and to work with the Department of Justice to prosecute those responsible for crimes" ([whitehouse.gov](#)).

3.4.1 The Fulton County search and the seizure of the 2020 ballot record

This is the single most aggressive federal investigative act in the entire inventory, and it is documented at the level of court orders rather than reporting.



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The action. On **January 28, 2026** FBI agents executed a search warrant at Fulton County's Election Hub and Operation Center in Union City, Georgia. The warrant was signed the same day by U.S. Magistrate Judge **Catherine Salinas** on a finding of probable cause ([order of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, May 6, 2026](#)). It sought all 2020 general-election physical ballots, absentee ballot envelopes, tabulator tapes for every voting machine used, the ballot images produced during the original count beginning November 3, 2020, and the 2020 voter rolls ([Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#)). The county's congressional delegation states that the Bureau "seized nearly **700 boxes** of original ballots and records from the 2020 presidential election" ([Senate press release](#)). The Bureau assigned 260 investigative analysts to the materials ([New York Times](#)).

The stated legal basis is the records-retention statute, and that is the analytically important fact. The warrant identified alleged violations of **52 U.S.C. § 20701**, the federal twenty-two-month election-records retention requirement, and **52 U.S.C. § 20511(2)(B)**, fraudulent counting of ballots ([order](#)). The federal hook was not fraud in the abstract; it was custody of the record. That places this action squarely within Vector 01 as a record-integrity and record-preservation instrument.

Chain of authorization. The criminal investigation originated in a referral from **Kurt Olsen**, the presidentially appointed Director of Election Security and Integrity, made "no later than 9:03 a.m. on January 5, 2026" and received the same day by **Thomas C. Albus**, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri, serving as Special Attorney to the Attorney General. The Bureau opened an assessment January 6, Special Agent Hugh Raymond Evans requested a full investigation January 12, approval followed January 14, and the warrant application was submitted January 27 ([order](#)). Albus holds a special appointment from the Attorney General to investigate election-integrity cases nationwide ([Bloomberg Law](#)).

The Bureau kept the evidence. On **May 6, 2026** the district court **denied** Fulton County's amended Rule 41(g) motion for return of property, allowing the Department to retain the seized materials. The court wrote: "The seizure in this case was certainly not perfect. However, the Court has carefully considered the factors set forth in *Richey* and finds that each factor weighs against exercising equitable jurisdiction," and found that the petitioners "did not establish that their rights were callously disregarded" ([order](#); [Guardian](#)). For an assessment that measures delivered hardening, this matters: the physical 2020 ballot record of the most contested county in the most contested state is now in federal custody and under federal analysis, which no prior administration accomplished in five years.

Countervailing, carried in full. The same order found the eighteen-page affidavit "far from perfect" and "defective in some respects." It specifically faulted the presentation of the **511,343-**



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versus-527,925 ballot-count discrepancy as misleading, because the affidavit omitted a scanner programming error and the fact that 511,343 was an internal in-progress report, and it faulted the affidavit for failing to explain that later ballot-image modification dates could result from Secretary of State personnel renaming files. The court nonetheless held: "This is not a situation where an officer left out all the facts that might undermine probable cause or where an officer intentionally lied" ([order](#)). Separately, a federal grand jury subpoena issued **April 17, 2026** (No. 2026R00350-01) to the Fulton County Board of Registration and Elections for the names, positions, residential addresses, emails and personal telephone numbers of 2020 election staff was **quashed on July 7, 2026** by U.S. District Judge **William Ray II**, who called it "unreasonable" under Rule 17(c)(2), "staggering," and an "arbitrary fishing expedition," and noted that the five-year limitations period on 2020-election crimes had run. Judge Ray added that even if granted "it would not lead to information that could be used to charge anyone with anything, at least not any viable charge" ([Politico](#)). No charges have been reported. Reporting also indicates the affidavit contained no allegation of foreign interference and rested on theories advanced by 2020 election critics ([CNN](#)).

The tempering that the record requires. Two of the three adverse features of this outcome are attributable to the conduct of other government actors rather than to the merit of the inquiry. First, the limitations period ran because five years elapsed between the election and the first federal examination of the records — a delay produced by the prior Department's declination to examine them at all, not by any act of the current investigators. A statute of limitations that expires during a period of official inaction measures the inaction. Second, the ballots had been under a **court-ordered seal** arising from pending state litigation ([Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#)), which is to say that the only lawful route to records that federal law required to be preserved and made available had been closed for years by the custodian's own litigation posture. Third, the affidavit's acknowledged defects concern the interpretation of discrepancies in records the county had never fully produced or explained; an affidavit drafted from an incomplete record will contain errors traceable to the incompleteness. None of that excuses the drafting failures the court identified, and this assessment does not excuse them. It does establish that the collapse of the grand jury process here is evidence of five years of non-production and prior-administration inaction, and only secondarily evidence about the current inquiry.

3.4.2 The Michigan matter and the Muskegon reopening directive

The underlying facts, at official-document level. In the autumn of 2020 a canvasser for **GBI Strategies**, a Tennessee-based voter-registration firm, delivered an estimated **8,000 to 10,000** registration forms to the Muskegon City Clerk's office. On **October 16, 2020** City Clerk **Ann Meisch** and Deputy Clerk Kimberly Young turned **42** applications they suspected were fraudulent over to the



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Muskegon Police Department; Meisch said "several hundred" forms contained information that did not match state records, citing similar handwriting, mismatched signatures, nonexistent addresses, and invalid telephone numbers ([WLNS](#); [Bridge Michigan](#)). Michigan State Police executed a search warrant at a GBI Strategies office in Southfield and recovered registration applications. Michigan agencies **referred the case to the FBI in 2021** as part of a multistate probe; an Attorney General spokesperson stated that "the decision to prosecute the fraud would be with the FBI" and that "at no point was it determined by state agencies that no crimes had been committed" ([Bridge Michigan](#)). Declassified documents indicate that Bureau personnel found **91 forms** bearing names not on the state voter rolls and **16 forms** with erroneous information or non-matching signatures ([Detroit Free Press](#)).

The closure, which is the fact the reopening responds to. By a closing memorandum dated **September 25, 2025**, the Bureau's **Grand Rapids Resident Agency closed** the investigation. The stated ground was exhaustion rather than exoneration: "No further investigation is warranted because logical investigation and/or leads have been exhausted" ([Bridge Michigan](#)). The accompanying conclusion was that "no criminal violation or priority threat to national security" had been identified ([Detroit Free Press](#)); the Bureau's stated conclusion was that "the investigation to date did not uncover any criminal violations or significant threats to national security" ([New York Times](#)). The record also shows that the Department had declined charges in the summer of 2024 and that the United States Attorney was "reconsidering prosecution" in October 2024 with "no further decisions" made ([Just the News](#)).

The executive action. In a roughly half-hour address on election security on **July 16, 2026**, the President declassified the case files, posting them at the White House election-integrity page, and directed **Director Kash Patel** "to ensure that the matter is fully investigated and to work with the Department of Justice to prosecute" ([Detroit Free Press](#); [whitehouse.gov](#)). The President asserted that the probe had been "buried and covered up" and that "the Biden Department of Justice slow-walked the investigation and killed it" ([Just the News](#)). This assessment credits the directive and the declassification as executive action, and credits the messaging effect independently: the case files of a closed federal election-fraud investigation are now public, which no prior administration had done.

Countervailing, and it is substantial. The reopening was a **verbal presidential directive delivered in a speech**, not a published written instrument, and **no source confirms that the Bureau has opened a case file, named an investigative team, or filed a charge**. No ballots were issued and no votes were cast as a result of the flagged forms; investigators concluded the fraud consisted of low-level canvassers padding output for pay rather than a scheme to alter an election



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result ([WLNS](#); [New York Times](#)). Michigan's Attorney General has said her office would resist federal intervention in state election administration ([WLNS](#)).

The tempering. Under the standing method of this assessment, the Michigan whistleblower testimony is taken as true and the underlying allegation is treated as potential rather than dismissed. On that footing the significant feature of this matter is not the size of the referral but the disposition history: a state agency referred a case it expressly did not clear, the federal government declined to charge it in 2024, reconsidered, made no decision, and then closed it in 2025 — on a stated ground of exhausted leads that coexists uneasily with 91 forms bearing names absent from the rolls. The five-year gap between the referral and the first public release of the file is itself the neglect-of-duty finding.

3.4.3 Severance of nongovernmental threat-designation partners

The action. On or about **October 3, 2025** Director Patel announced that the Bureau was terminating its relationships with the **Southern Poverty Law Center**, having indicated earlier that same week — on or about **October 1, 2025** — that it would end its association with the **Anti-Defamation League** ([Associated Press](#); [Politico](#)). Patel called the Center a "partisan smear machine" and wrote that "this FBI won't partner with political fronts masquerading as watchdogs"; Politico reports he also cited an administration-wide push against anti-Christian bias, and that conservatives had long objected to the Center's "Hate Map" ([Associated Press](#); [Politico](#)).

Why this belongs in an election-security assessment. The mechanism at issue in the information-control vector is the routing of a private organization's threat and extremism designations into a federal law-enforcement channel, where they acquire the force of government characterization without going through any adjudicative or rulemaking process. The cooperation that ended included research on hate crimes and extremism, law-enforcement training, and, in the Anti-Defamation League's case, **mandatory workshops for new agents and trainees at Quantico** ([Associated Press](#); [Politico](#)). Severing it removes a private input to federal threat characterization, which is the same class of action as the closure of the Global Engagement Center and the termination of the content-flagging partnerships assessed under Vector 05.

Countervailing, and the limits of the instrument. The instrument was an announcement — a public statement and a post on the Director's social-media account. **No memorandum, directive, or testimony establishing the termination has been located, and no source identifies a specific database, portal, briefing series, or trusted-partner access channel that was formally cut** ([Associated Press](#)). An action taken by announcement can be reversed by announcement, and this one leaves no documentary trail that a successor would have to undo. The



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Center's response was that "for decades, we have shared data and analysis with the public to protect civil rights and hold extremists accountable" and that it "remain[s] committed to exposing hate and extremism" ([Politico](#)) — which is to say the organization's output continues; only the federal channel for it closed. The absence of a written instrument is itself a transparency deficiency: neither Congress nor the public can audit what access existed, what was terminated, or whether the termination was complete, because the government never documented the relationship it is now ending. That opacity is the same defect, run in the opposite political direction, that made the original arrangement objectionable.

3.5 Department of War

The Department of War holds no election-administration authority and issued no election-specific instrument in this period. It appears in this inventory for three reasons: it supplies the physical-access-control component of the border program that Vector 01 and Vector 10 both depend on, it executed the kinetic component of the counter-cartel program assessed under Vector 06 and Vector 10, and its cyber component declined to reconstitute the one standing federal capability specifically built to counter foreign election interference.

Authority. Proclamation 10886 of January 20, 2025, "Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border of the United States," invokes sections 201 and 301 of the National Emergencies Act, **10 U.S.C. § 12302** (Ready Reserve call-up), 10 U.S.C. § 2808 (military construction), and 10 U.S.C. § 2214, and directs a thirty-day and a ninety-day report, the latter to include a recommendation on whether to invoke the Insurrection Act ([White House](#)). **Executive Order 14167** is the authority cited in the establishment of the National Defense Areas ([U.S. Air Force](#)). Joint Task Force–Southern Border personnel operate under **Title 10** ([U.S. Northern Command](#)).

Joint Task Force–Southern Border. The task force stood up on **March 14, 2025** with approximately **10,000 total service members** — about 7,500 added in the preceding sixty days plus roughly 2,500 already present ([U.S. Northern Command](#)). At the one-year mark on **March 14, 2026**, more than **20,000 personnel** had served in it, **five National Defense Areas** had been established, and the force had posted approximately 6,000 signs, emplaced 2,000 buoys, and covered 656 miles ([Joint Base San Antonio](#)). The five National Defense Areas are New Mexico (April 21, 2025, approximately 170 miles), West Texas (May 1, 2025, approximately 63 miles), South Texas (approximately 250 miles of the Rio Grande in Cameron and Hidalgo Counties), Yuma, Arizona (approximately 140 miles), and NDA 5 in the Imperial Valley of southern California, with signs posted at Naval Air Facility El Centro on **December 26, 2025** ([U.S. Air Force](#); [Navy Region Southwest](#)).



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Counter-cartel operations. Following the Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist designations of eight organizations on **February 20, 2025** ([Department of State](#)), the first announced maritime strike occurred on **September 2, 2025** ([Reuters](#)). On the night of **November 13, 2025** the Secretary of War announced **Operation SOUTHERN SPEAR**, and a Pentagon official stated: "As of today, there have been **20 total kinetic strikes with 79 narco-terrorists killed**" ([DefenseScoop](#)).

The internal failure, and it is the most consequential item in this section. The one standing federal capability built specifically to counter foreign election interference is the joint Cyber Command–National Security Agency Election Security Group. Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee on **April 28, 2026**, **Gen. Joshua Rudd**, commanding U.S. Cyber Command and directing the National Security Agency, said adversaries were likely to target the 2026 midterms and confirmed that an Election Security Group had **not** been re-established, stating that he was not aware one had been stood up and that the command stood ready to do so if necessary ([CNN](#); [Senate Armed Services Committee transcript](#)). This is not judicial drag and not state drag. It is an internal, unforced, fully reversible decision not to reconstitute a capability the government already knows how to build, taken in the same period in which the administration was publicly asserting that foreign adversaries had compromised American election data at scale. Under Vector 10 it is the largest single self-inflicted gap in the record, and it is scored as such.

3.6 Department of Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security is the largest body of election-relevant executive action in the record by volume, and the most internally divided in direction. Its grant conditions are the most substantively valuable single measure in the entire inventory; its border components delivered the one component of the record-integrity vector that neither a court nor a state could nullify; and its cybersecurity component was reduced, defunded, and partially furloughed over the same period. The subsections below follow the Department's own components. Secretary **Markwayne Mullin** was confirmed 54–45 on **March 23, 2026**.

3.6.1 Grant conditions on homeland-security funding

DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin was confirmed 54–45 on March 23, 2026. The Department's July 10, 2026 action is the most consequential lever the administration has pulled on voting equipment, because it uses money rather than a contested claim of federal authority over election administration. Five conditions now attach to Homeland Security Grant Program awards exceeding one billion dollars, with **twenty percent of each award withheld** pending verified compliance ([DHS, July 10, 2026](#)):



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1. Submit a plan to transition away from unsecure electronic voting systems that use bar codes or QR codes to count votes, toward equipment accepting hand-marked paper ballots.
2. Manually audit at least five percent of all ballots cast after each federal election.
3. Reconcile the number of voters who participated against the number of ballots cast.
4. Within 120 days of accepting the award, use the USCIS SAVE system to verify the citizenship of everyone in the state voter registration database.
5. Use SAVE or another authorized system to verify citizenship of all poll workers and election-system operators.

The audit condition is stronger in its implementing guidance than in the announcement. The Department's release describes "physically reviewing a random selection of ballots," but FEMA Grant Programs Directorate Information Bulletin No. 580, issued August 10, 2026, specifies that **"All ballots from each randomly selected precinct and from each randomly selected batch must be manually counted,"** that the selection must span all voting methods, and that a minimum of two races must be counted. That is a precinct-level full hand count of the selected units, not a spot check of individual ballots. Applications were due July 24, 2026 with awards by September 30, 2026; the conditions appear at pages 15 and 16 of the notice of funding opportunity, the twenty-percent holdback at page 8, and election security is designated a three-percent National Priority Area.

The design gap that matters most is the selection rule. The condition requires *random* selection and nothing else. There is no risk-limiting construction, no stratification by margin, no weighting toward jurisdictions whose results decide statewide outcomes, and no requirement that the selected precincts include the jurisdictions most capable of changing an election result. Random selection across a state distributes audit effort in proportion to precinct count, not in proportion to risk — which means the large, high-density, centrally tabulated jurisdictions that are individually capable of supplying a statewide margin can be, and statistically usually will be, underrepresented in any given draw. The 2020 record makes the arithmetic concrete: the certified statewide margins were 11,779 votes in Georgia, 10,457 in Arizona, 20,682 in Wisconsin, 80,555 in Pennsylvania, 33,596 in Nevada, and 154,188 in Michigan, and in every one of those states a single county — Fulton, Maricopa, Milwaukee or Dane, Clark, Wayne — processes enough ballots to supply the entire margin by itself. A five-percent random draw is a reasonable instrument for detecting diffuse, statewide error. It is a weak instrument for detecting concentrated manipulation in exactly the handful of jurisdictions where concentrated manipulation would be worth attempting. The condition should be amended to require that the five percent be drawn to include, at minimum, the pivotal jurisdictions in each state — those



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whose ballot volume equals or exceeds the most recent statewide margin — with the remainder drawn at random. Without that stratification the audit is a sampling exercise rather than a verification of the outcome, and a state can satisfy the condition in full while never hand-counting a single ballot in the county whose count is actually in question.

Two further design features limit the bite. Condition 1 requires only a transition plan on the state's own timeline, not a transition. And Information Bulletin 580 preserves ballot-marking devices for accessibility compliance. The conditions are therefore best read as an agenda-setting and disclosure mechanism with real financial pressure behind it, not as an equipment mandate.

Litigation. *State of Illinois v. FEMA*, No. 1:26-cv-00485 (D.R.I.), filed July 23, 2026 before Judge Mary Susan McElroy, brings twenty-six states plus the District of Columbia and two governors against the conditions ([complaint](#); [Clearinghouse docket](#)). A parallel challenge was filed by the Brennan Center at No. 1:26-cv-02886 ([complaint](#)). The conditions' survival through November 2026 is therefore not assured.

On July 17, 2026 Mullin sent letters to the secretaries of state of California, New Jersey, Nevada, and Pennsylvania asserting there "may be as many as" 190,832, 35,152, 15,903, and 14,576 potential noncitizen registrations respectively, requesting a response within two weeks ([DHS, July 17, 2026](#)). At the White House briefing that day he said that officials who received the information and chose not to act "can also be held accountable by fines, by penalties, and even depending on how far it goes, prison time" ([Reuters](#)). The recurring departmental formulation is "Election security is national security," used on July 10, July 17, and again in the August 20, 2026 release announcing voter-fraud charges against a Chinese national ([DHS](#)).

The Nevada number did not survive contact with verification. At an August 13, 2026 meeting DHS conceded it had manually confirmed 185 of the 15,903 names, with more than 14,000 unresolved and 6,200 labeled higher-confidence matches, some of which could be naturalized citizens with un-updated records. DHS fraud-division official Kimberley Vogt said of the 185: "That would be the ceiling... it should not magically go above that." Senior counselor Heather Honey confirmed DHS lacks authority to prosecute election officials and has made no criminal referrals against them ([CNN, Aug 21, 2026](#)).

3.6.2 The September 2, 2026 referral letter to the Attorney General

On **September 2, 2026** Secretary Mullin wrote to Attorney General **Todd Blanche**, and the White House published the signed letter in full ([Department of Homeland Security, letter to the Attorney General](#)), linking it from its election-integrity page under the heading "Private Voter Information



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Sharing" ([White House](#)). Blanche had been confirmed **50-49** on **August 8, 2026** on Roll Call Vote 230 ([United States Senate](#)) and sworn in on **August 10, 2026**, having served as Acting Attorney General since April and succeeding Pam Bondi ([News From The States](#)).

What the letter is, precisely. It is not a new enforcement action and does not claim to be one. Its operative sentence is that in the course of the Department's protective work "DHS identified several issues during my predecessor's tenure that resulted in referrals to the Department of Justice (DOJ)," and that "[d]ue to the potential impact of the issues identified, I wanted to make sure that you are aware of these prior referrals." The Department's spokesman confirmed that reading on the record: "Referrals were made to the Department of Justice for their review to determine if further investigation would be warranted," and "DPPA enforcement is handled by the DOJ, so the referral was the appropriate step" ([Democracy Docket](#), a pro-voting advocacy outlet that carried the departmental statement in full). Reporting places the original data referral in **September 2025** ([Just the News](#), a conservative outlet, and the only source for that date).

The letter states its own jurisdictional basis in one sentence, which matters because the principal objection to it is jurisdictional: "The Department serves as the Sector Risk Management Agency for the election infrastructure subsector, which requires my team to identify vulnerabilities and risks to election systems."

The first referral: barcode tabulation as a Help America Vote Act compliance question.

DHS asked the Department of Justice "to determine if voting systems that count votes from barcodes and QR codes (Quick Response Codes) are compliant with Title III of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002." The provision at issue is **52 U.S.C. § 21081(a)(2)(B)(i)**: "The voting system shall produce a permanent paper record with a manual audit capacity for such system," with the paper record required to be "available as an official record for any recount" ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)). The Department's theory, in its own words: "Because barcodes and QR codes are machine-readable encodings created to eliminate the need for human-readable text, they may not be suitable for voter verification or manual audits. DHS has identified some systems that are configured to disassociate programming of the printed text and the barcode, so the resulting paper record may not be a reliable record for a manual audit." The letter cites **EO 14248** as the instruction under which the question was raised.

That disassociation sentence is the most consequential new factual assertion in the letter. It is the first time a cabinet department has stated, as a departmental finding rather than as a researcher's demonstration, that fielded systems are configured so that the printed text and the machine-readable encoding are programmatically disassociated. It is also, like the SAVE match figures assessed above,



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an assertion whose underlying analysis has not been published — no system, vendor, jurisdiction, count, or method accompanies it. The finding would be far more useful to the state officials who run the equipment as a disclosed technical record than as a sentence in a letter.

The authority the letter actually attaches to it is a CISA product, and it checks out. The letter's single footnote cites a Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency report for the line "[H]ackers could change the votes encoded in the barcode, without having physical access to the machines," at page 4. The full passage in the underlying document reads: "in 2020, ImageCast X Ballot Marking Devices printed voters' completed ballots on paper but encoded their selections in a barcode that voters had no way to verify. **A researcher showed that hackers could change the votes encoded in the barcode, without even having physical access to the machines.**" The document is *CISA Election Report*, footer-stamped "As of July 13, 2026," distributed as one of eight files inside the July 2026 declassification package ([White House, Vulnerabilities in Electronic Voting and Ballot Counting Systems](#)); a publicly hosted copy of the same report is available at [Free Speech For People](#) (an advocacy host; the document itself is CISA's). Two features of that report qualify the citation and are recorded here rather than omitted: it describes CISA activity "[f]rom around 2019 to 2024" that was "all carried out upon the request of system owners and operators," and it states that in every case CISA notified the system owner of the vulnerability. The barcode line is therefore a federal cybersecurity agency's own published characterization of the architecture — which is the strongest possible provenance for the argument assessed under Vector 02 — and it is not evidence of an exploited election.

The second referral: motor-vehicle data, the Driver's Privacy Protection Act, and two private intermediaries. DHS asked the Department to "review the legality of ongoing sharing of state motor vehicle data and voter registration data with several private non-profit non-governmental organizations (NGOs)," flagging "potential violations of the Driver's Privacy Protection Act (DPPA), 18 U.S.C. §§ 2721–2725 through states' disclosure of sensitive state motor vehicle data for use in identifying and registering individuals who had previously declined to register to vote." The two entities named are the **Electronic Registration Information Center** and the **Center for Election Innovation and Research**.

The statutory framework is narrow and specific. Section 2721(b) enumerates **fourteen** permissible uses of state motor-vehicle data. The research exception the recipients rely on, § 2721(b)(5), reads in full: "For use in research activities, and for use in producing statistical reports, so long as the personal information is not published, redisclosed, or used to contact individuals." Section 2721(c) limits resale and redisclosure and imposes a five-year recordkeeping duty on authorized recipients ([Cornell Legal](#)



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[Information Institute](#)). Penalties run to a criminal fine under § 2723(a) and a civil penalty of up to **\$5,000 per day** against a state motor-vehicle department with a policy or practice of substantial noncompliance ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)), while the private cause of action under § 2724(a) belongs to "the individual to whom the information pertains" ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)). The Supreme Court's holding in ***Reno v. Condon***, 528 U.S. 141 (2000), supplies the reach the referral depends on: the Act "regulates the universe of entities that participate as suppliers to the market for motor vehicle information — the States as initial suppliers ... and private resellers or redisclosers of that information in commerce" ([Justia](#)).

The documentary core of the referral is verifiable in the consortium's own governing instrument, and it is the strongest item in the letter. The Membership Agreement in force, with updates through **July 21, 2025**, provides at § 2(b): "Within sixty (60) days of the Certification Date, and at least every sixty (60) days thereafter, the Member shall transmit the following data to ERIC: (1) all inactive and active voter files ... and (2) all licensing or identification records from motor vehicles departments ... Under no circumstances shall the Member transmit an individual's record where the record contains documentation or other information indicating that the individual is a non-citizen of the United States" ([Electronic Registration Information Center, Bylaws and Membership Agreement](#)). Both halves of the letter's characterization are exactly as stated: member states must ship motor-vehicle records on a sixty-day cycle, and the one field that would allow the resulting outreach list to exclude noncitizens is contractually barred from transmission. A list-maintenance instrument that receives driver data every sixty days while being prohibited from receiving citizenship data cannot screen its own output for citizenship, and that is a structural defect in the record chain rather than an allegation about anyone's motives.

One quotation in the letter is dated and must be corrected. The letter states that the model contract required states to "at a minimum, initiate contact with each and every eligible or possibly eligible citizen" on the eligible-but-unregistered list. That language is from the **February 3, 2020** bylaws, Exhibit A Membership Agreement § 5(a), which also carried a 95 percent contact threshold by October 1 of a federal general election year ([archived 2020 bylaws](#)). The agreement in force since July 2025 is narrower: § 4(b)(ii)(B) requires the member to initiate contact with "individuals identified in the report deemed potentially eligible by the Member," a formulation that conditions outreach on the member state's own eligibility determination and permits removal of individuals the member finds ineligible ([Electronic Registration Information Center](#)). The mandatory-universal-contact argument is sound as to the 2020 cycle, which is the cycle the referral concerns, and is not sound as a description of the obligation today. This report card states the distinction rather than adopting the letter's tense.



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The money. The letter puts the philanthropic channel at more than **\$70 million** received by the Center for Election Innovation and Research from a Chan Zuckerberg Initiative 501(c)(3), regranted to state election officials. The organization's own account of the same program is that it began in September 2020 and awarded "nearly \$65 million" to twenty-three states, "[d]ue to the generous support of Priscilla Chan and Mark Zuckerberg" ([Center for Election Innovation and Research](#)). The gap may be a received-versus-regranted distinction, but **no public document reconciles the two figures**, and the lower number is the one the recipient publishes. Pennsylvania's Department of State received **\$13 million** of it ([Spotlight PA](#)), under an agreement the letter quotes as requiring the grantee to "cooperate with CEIR, including providing data, as CEIR reasonably requests." Reporting independently documents the motor-vehicle-derived eligible-but-unregistered pathway for Pennsylvania through a July 2020 message from the organization's executive director ([Broad + Liberty](#), a right-leaning outlet).

The Colorado incident is the one instance in the referral that is fully verified, and it is the most probative. On **September 27, 2022** roughly **30,000 noncitizens** were mailed voter-registration invitations by the Colorado Secretary of State. The mechanism is the point: a 102,000-name list derived from the consortium's data was compared against a Department of Revenue driver's-license file that included noncitizen licenses but lacked the formatting information needed to filter them out. The Secretary of State's office said none of the recipients would be permitted to register, sent corrective notices, and instituted daily Social Security number comparisons, and county clerks refer suspect cases to district attorneys ([The Colorado Sun](#)). Both halves of that record belong in this assessment. A federally derived, philanthropically funded outreach pipeline generated 30,000 invitations to ineligible persons because the citizenship field was structurally unavailable to it — and the downstream controls caught it. That is the same finding this report card reaches under Vector 01 from the opposite direction: the dominant documented cause of ineligible enrollment is a government process enrolling an ineligible person by administrative default, not an alien defeating a control.

Two of the letter's factual assertions cannot be sourced and are not adopted here. The letter states that when Georgia ran its voter file through SAVE in 2026, Citizenship and Immigration Services analysts identified "more than 42,000 deceased registrants on Georgia's state voter rolls." That figure — reported elsewhere as 42,776 — traces only to a single advocacy publication ([The Daily Signal](#), a conservative outlet), and **no statement from Georgia addressing it has been located**; the state is on record only as to the accompanying noncitizen figure, which its spokesman characterized as records "flagged by our office as potential noncitizens upon registering" that "never made it onto the voter rolls" (same source), and more broadly as "flagged as possible noncitizens" rather than confirmed ([CNN](#)). The reliability caution that governs every SAVE-derived number in this



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report applies here with full force: Utah's 2025 review ran more than 71,000 records, produced roughly 9,000 unconfirmed results, and after manual review confirmed **twenty-seven** ([ABC News](#)). Second, the letter states that a citizen in Renton, Washington discovered "550 ERIC 'Eligible but Unregistered' voter registration postcards mailed to the same commercial address." The February 2026 discovery itself is documented — approximately **360 to 400 unopened, unvoted outgoing ballots** from 2022 through 2025 found behind a strip mall and addressed largely to private mailboxes at a commercial mail service, taken into custody by the Postal Inspection Service on April 21, 2026, with no charges ([KUOW](#); [Kent Reporter](#)). The 550 registration postcards are **not corroborated in any located source**, and the county's own characterization is adverse: King County Elections director Julie Wise said "[t]here was no opportunity for fraud here," and Secretary of State Steve Hobbs said "Washington elections are safe and secure" (same sources).

Countervailing, and it is substantial. Four points cut against the referrals, and the first is dispositive as to the record so far.

First, **the Driver's Privacy Protection Act theory has already been litigated and lost.** In *1789 Foundation, Inc. v. Electronic Registration Information Center and David J. Becker*, No. 24-cv-755-wmc (W.D. Wis.), Judge William M. Conley dismissed the action without prejudice on **June 11, 2026** for lack of Article III standing, holding that the Act's private cause of action belongs to the individual whose information was disclosed rather than to an organization; the Center for Election Innovation and Research and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation were voluntarily dismissed. The court also granted **Rule 11 sanctions** against plaintiffs' counsel, described one theory as "frivolous on its face," and characterized the allegation that the consortium shared data with the research organization as "**factually frivolous**" ([Opinion and Order](#); [Democracy Docket](#), advocacy). The honest reading is two-sided: the dismissal was jurisdictional, so **no merits ruling exists in either direction**, and a federal referral would not carry the standing defect that sank the private suit — but the sharing premise the referral rests on has already been described in adverse terms by a federal judge, and that is the most serious obstacle in front of it.

Second, **the enforcement vehicles do not obviously reach the named entities.** The Act's government instruments are the criminal fine under § 2723(a) and the civil penalty under § 2723(b), which runs against a **state motor-vehicle department** with a policy or practice of substantial noncompliance, while the private action under § 2724 belongs to individuals ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)). On the face of the statute, the most readily available lawful target of a departmental enforcement action is therefore a state agency that transmitted the data, not the nonprofits the letter names — which would put the Department in the position of penalizing the same



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state election and motor-vehicle offices whose cooperation the rest of the administration's program requires.

Third, **the same mismatch governs the barcode referral, and more sharply.** The Attorney General's HAVA enforcement authority at **52 U.S.C. § 21111** permits "a civil action against any State or jurisdiction" for relief necessary to carry out the § 21081 requirements ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)). It does not authorize an action against a vendor, a system, or a laboratory. The Department's own published position is that it expresses HAVA positions "through case-by-case litigation" and that it "has no role in distributing federal funds under HAVA or auditing compliance with funding requirements" ([Justice Department, Civil Rights Division](#)). A determination that barcode tabulation violates § 21081(a)(2)(B) would therefore be enforceable only by suing the 1,954 counties' states — the same states the Department is simultaneously suing for voter-roll access and the same states the grant conditions ask to volunteer. One advocacy analysis presses the jurisdictional objection further, arguing that "DHS has no role in administering or distributing HAVA election-security grants," that HAVA is administered by the independent Election Assistance Commission, and that executive officials "cannot unilaterally impose new requirements" ([Institute for Responsive Government](#), a pro-voting advocacy organization).

Fourth, **no adjudicated authority supports the barcode theory, and the trend of state action runs the other way.** No court and no Commission determination holding that barcode- or QR-code-counting ballot-marking devices fail § 21081(a)(2)(B) has been located. The long-running challenge to Georgia's system in *Curling v. Raffensperger* was **dismissed** in April 2025, with the court finding that plaintiffs had not shown the system prevents voting and describing some of the arguments as "more aligned with policy disagreements than constitutional infringements" ([Georgia Recorder](#)), and the Eleventh Circuit's 2022 opinion in the same case resolves the print timing of backup voter lists and ballot-scanner mark sensitivity, not barcode verifiability ([Eleventh Circuit](#)). The Commission's own May 27, 2025 policy supports "auditable and software-independent" systems producing "a paper record of every vote" but says nothing about barcodes or the statutory provision ([Election Assistance Commission](#)). And Georgia's **SB 3EX**, signed June 25, 2026, delayed that state's own QR-code ban to **January 1, 2028**, locking in QR-code machines for November 2026 ([Capitol Beat](#)).

The responses on the record. The Center for Election Innovation and Research answered through its executive director, David Becker, on September 4, 2026: the organization "takes seriously the concerns raised in Secretary Mullin's letter but firmly rejects any suggestion that it receives motor-vehicle or voter data on an ongoing basis, conditions grants on access to sensitive information, or uses



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such information for partisan purposes," adding that "DHS did not contact CEIR for any information or clarification prior to issuing this letter" and that the organization "welcomes any opportunity to further clarify the nature of the research it conducted in partnership with the states" ([Colorado Politics](#)). The consortium "did not respond to a request for comment" (same source). The Brennan Center characterized the campaign against the consortium as "conspiracy theories" and said the consortium permits "more precise matching than what states can do on their own" ([NOTUS](#)). **No response from the Department of Justice, the National Association of Secretaries of State, or any state chief election officer has been located.**

Status as of the assessment date. The Department of Justice has taken **no located action on either referral** — no announced investigation, civil investigative demand, filed action, or declination — and has not commented. The Department of Homeland Security issued **no press release of its own**; the letter's only vehicle was the White House posting. The consequence for the ratings is stated plainly: this is credited as executive action and as effort on Vector 07, and it is credited with nothing on net effectiveness, because a referral that has produced no departmental action is not delivered hardening.

Assessment. Two of the letter's documentary findings are strong and independently checkable — the sixty-day motor-vehicle transmission requirement paired with the contractual bar on transmitting citizenship information, and a federal cybersecurity agency's own published statement that barcode-encoded selections were alterable without physical access. Both go to structure rather than to anyone's intent, and both are the kind of finding this report card treats as substantive regardless of who raises it. Against that, the letter's outreach quotation is dated to a superseded agreement, its Georgia and Renton figures cannot be sourced outside advocacy publication or at all, its money figure is higher than the recipient's own published number, and neither referral has an obvious enforcement vehicle that reaches the entities it names. The pattern is the one this report card has identified in every vector: the administration's structural diagnosis is better supported than its specific numbers, and its instruments are aimed at parties the governing statutes do not let it reach directly. Under this document's potential standard the referrals are credited as a real and correctly aimed effort against an unadjudicated but documented exposure — and the single action that would most improve their prospects is the same one identified throughout Part III, which is publication of the technical analysis the Department says it already holds.

3.6.3 U.S. Customs and Border Protection

Customs and Border Protection holds the physical-access-control function that the front end of the registration record depends on, and the identity-document interdiction function that Vector 10



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measures. Its instruments in this period are the presidential border instruments tabulated under President Trump above, the enforcement operations summarized here, and the reconstruction of its public-facing mobile application.

This is the largest single body of executive action in the administration's record, and it belongs in an election-security assessment rather than in an immigration one. It bears directly on four of the ten attack vectors: on the integrity of the registration record at its front end (Vector 01), on the financial-influence vector through cartel proceeds and the federal funding of the migrant-services ecosystem (Vector 06), on institutional integrity where a state agency's own employees describe knowingly enrolling ineligible persons (Vector 08), and on foreign access to the American identity-document and electoral system (Vector 10). It is scored here on all four rather than set aside as an immigration matter.

The enforcement and designation instruments. The four citizenship instruments — EO 14160, EO 14418, EO 14419, and EO 14411 — are tabulated under President Trump above and are analyzed under birthright citizenship in that section and under counterfeit identity documents below.

Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
EO 14159, Protecting the American People Against Invasion	90 FR 8443	Jan 20, 2025	In force; § 17 (sanctuary-jurisdiction defunding) preliminarily enjoined and the ruling affirmed on appeal
EO 14165, Securing Our Borders	90 FR 8467	Jan 20, 2025	In force; no injunction identified
Proclamation 10886, Declaring a National Emergency at the Southern Border	91 FR 1665	Jan 20, 2025	Continued Jan 12, 2026 for a further year
Proclamation 10888, Guaranteeing the States Protection Against Invasion	90 FR 8333	Jan 20, 2025	In force
EO 14161, Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats	90 FR 8451	Jan 20, 2025	In force
EO 14157, Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as FTOs and SDGTs	90 FR 8439	Jan 20, 2025	Executed; eight organizations designated at 90 FR 10030, Feb 20, 2025; emergency continued Jan 12, 2026



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Instrument	Cite	Date	Status
Laken Riley Act	P.L. 119-1	Jan 29, 2025	Enacted; mandatory detention for charged aliens

The magnitude is not in dispute even among sources hostile to the policy. Southwest border encounters across all components fell from 2,135,005 in FY2024 to **443,671 in FY2025, a 79 percent decrease**; nationwide encounters fell from 2,901,142 to 691,906, a 76 percent decrease ([House Homeland Security Committee, September 2025 Border Brief](#)). Border Patrol apprehensions between southwest ports of entry totaled **237,538 for FY2025 — the lowest level since 1970** (same brief). The lowest single month in the published CBP series was **July 2025 at 4,596** ([CBP Nationwide Encounters](#)). Known gotaways, which had run to roughly 2.2 million since FY2021 ([House Homeland Security Committee, December 2024](#)), fell more than 90 percent, to a daily average of 132 by early February 2025 ([House Homeland Security Committee, January 2025 Border Brief](#)). DHS reports fifteen consecutive months of zero Border Patrol releases at the southwest border as of August 13, 2026 ([DHS](#)).

3.6.4 Counterfeit identity documents of Chinese origin

The seizure record is documented, large, and directly attributable to Chinese and Hong Kong sources. In a single six-month period, Customs and Border Protection officers at the Chicago International Mail Facility seized **1,513 shipments containing 19,888 counterfeit United States driver's licenses**, the majority originating in China and Hong Kong ([CBP Chicago](#)). CBP Louisville seized 2,909 counterfeit licenses plus 3,123 blank card stocks from China in six shipments destined for the New York area, representing Florida, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, and Ohio ([CBP Louisville](#)). Cincinnati seized 2,233 counterfeit licenses in 343 shipments along with 1,607 laminates or blank cards ([CBP Cincinnati](#)). The Chicago release notes that the seized Michigan licenses carried **working barcodes** — that is, they were capable of passing electronic verification at the point of presentation. EO 14411, Strengthening Customs Enforcement, reaches this interdiction pathway directly, and the 2020 report's counterfeit-license finding is the reason it is scored here.

The distinction that must be preserved. The seizures are documented; the *purpose* of the documents is not. No fetched primary source establishes that any seized counterfeit license was used to register or to vote. The only asserted voting link in the released record is a **September 2020 memorandum from an agent in the FBI's Albany field office** relaying a source claim that China planned to send thousands of fraudulent driver's licenses into the United States for ballot-



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casting purposes — a memo that was "immediately met with skepticism from senior intelligence agents" ([The New York Times](#)). CBP's own Chicago release points toward a different primary explanation, noting that recipients were mostly college-age. The defensible claim, and the one this report card makes, is narrower than the popular version and stronger for being narrower: a foreign adversary is manufacturing and exporting American identity credentials with functioning barcodes at industrial volume, into a country where documentary identity is the front-end control for voter enrollment in most states, and no federal instrument currently requires that a registration be checked against that exposure. Whether those specific documents have been used to vote is unproven and is treated here as potential rather than established.

3.6.5 The CBP One application and its replacement

The mobile application through which the preceding administration scheduled lawful entry at ports of entry was not merely discontinued; it was inverted into an instrument of departure. This is one of the clearest examples in the record of executive action that required no legislation, no state cooperation, and no rulemaking.

January 20, 2025 — the scheduling function was removed and every pending appointment was cancelled. Customs and Border Protection announced that "effective at noon EST" it had removed the appointment-scheduling functionality from CBP One and that "all existing appointments have been cancelled." The function had been used to schedule arrivals at eight southwest border ports of entry ([U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)).

March 10, 2025 — rebranding to CBP Home with a self-deportation reporting feature. The Department announced the launch of the CBP Home application with a self-deport reporting feature. Secretary Kristi Noem: "The CBP Home app gives aliens the option to leave now and self-deport, so they may still have the opportunity to return legally in the future and live the American dream. If they don't, we will find them, we will deport them, and they will never return" ([Department of Homeland Security](#)). The published incentive package comprises cost-free travel out of the United States, forgiveness of failure-to-depart fines, and a **\$1,000 exit bonus** paid after confirmed departure ([Department of Homeland Security](#)).

June 16, 2025 — functional split. Customs and Border Protection introduced **CBP Link**, which took over traveler and entry-related functions, leaving CBP Home focused on departure reporting ([U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)). The application remains under active maintenance into 2026 ([Google Play listing](#)); **no specific functional change during calendar 2026 has been documented**, and the material 2026 development is judicial rather than technical.



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The associated parole terminations. The Congressional Research Service records the chronology: CBP One launched in October 2020 and the appointment-scheduling function was added in January 2023; on **March 25, 2025** the Cuba, Haiti, Nicaragua and Venezuela parole process and associated work authorization were terminated; on **April 11, 2025** parole granted through CBP One appointments was terminated; on **May 5, 2025** the Department announced travel assistance and the \$1,000 stipend; and on **May 9, 2025** the Presidential Proclamation "Establishing Project Homecoming" issued. The notice language to parolees was "It is time for you to leave the United States" ([Congressional Research Service IF13030](#)).

Scale, stated at the most defensible figure. 904,530 individuals scheduled appointments through CBP One between January 2023 and November 2024 ([Congressional Research Service IF13030](#)). The Department's own "more than 1 million aliens" figure ([Department of Homeland Security](#)) exceeds the appointment count and appears to combine CBP One with the separate parole process; no source reconciles the two, and this assessment uses the smaller, primary-source figure.

The election nexus, stated precisely and without inflation. The mechanism by which a parole entrant could reach a voter roll runs through work authorization to a Social Security number to a motor-vehicle transaction. Parole **did not automatically confer work authorization**; the Social Security Administration's Emergency Message EM-25065 states that the parole process "did not automatically confer work authorization," that Department notices of **June 12, 2025** terminated parole *and* revoked parole-based employment authorization, and that the SAVE system now returns "No Status not employment authorized" for affected individuals, identifying category **C11** as the relevant parole-based authorization ([Social Security Administration EM-25065](#)). Because a Social Security number for work purposes generally requires Department work authorization ([Social Security Administration, Publication 05-10096](#)), a parolee who obtained a C11 document could lawfully obtain a number and one who did not could not. **No case, audit, indictment, or agency finding documents any person who entered through a CBP One appointment subsequently being registered to vote.** That absence is stated rather than papered over. Under this report card's method the enrollment risk is treated as **potential**, and the cancellation of the channel is credited as a front-end control on that potential rather than as the interdiction of a proven pathway.

Countervailing, and it is the strongest single adverse ruling in this Part. On **March 31, 2026** Judge **Allison Burroughs** of the District of Massachusetts held that the Department **unlawfully terminated the parole of more than 900,000 CBP One users**, finding that the "terminations of parole exceeded the agency's statutory authority" ([Reuters](#)). That followed the



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Supreme Court's stay, on **May 30, 2025**, in *Noem v. Svitlana Doe*, No. 24A1079, of an earlier District of Massachusetts order that had blocked the categorical parole termination, over the dissents of Justices Jackson and Sotomayor ([Supreme Court of the United States](#)). The appellate posture is therefore genuinely unsettled, and the March 2026 merits ruling is carried here at full weight.

The tempering. The adverse ruling turns on statutory authority for *categorical* termination, not on any finding that the channel was well-controlled or that the entrants were screened for the purposes this assessment measures. The record also contains a documented transparency failure on the government's own side of this question: the Department published a usage figure it has never reconciled with the primary count, and the enrollment-risk question that would settle the election nexus in either direction has never been the subject of a published federal audit, even though the Department holds both the SAVE system and the parole records needed to run one. A government that declines to produce the analysis that would resolve a contested empirical question cannot fairly claim the benefit of the resulting uncertainty, and neither can its critics.

3.6.6 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Interior enforcement moved in the same direction. ICE recorded a record **50,925 arrests in August 2026** ([DHS](#)), and the detained population stood at 65,765 on July 11, 2026 ([TRAC](#)). For an election-security assessment the relevant consequence is upstream of any of this: the population that a registration system can erroneously enroll, that a census can count for apportionment, and that a smuggling network can monetize is a function of how many people enter and remain. Every one of those denominators fell sharply, and it fell through instruments that required neither a court's permission nor a state's cooperation. That is the reason this section scores as heavily as it does.

Two qualifications are required by the record and are stated rather than buried. First, the FY2025 floor has not held. Monthly southwest apprehensions of 9,848 in June 2026 and 9,295 in July 2026 are roughly double the July 2025 low, though still 94 percent below the prior administration's monthly average ([DHS, July 16, 2026](#); [DHS, August 13, 2026](#)). Second, the headline removal figures are contested on methodology, and the challenge comes from the administration's own side of the aisle. DHS announced more than two million departures in fewer than 250 days, but **1.6 million of that total is an explicit estimate of self-deportations** rather than a count ([DHS](#)), while ICE's own posted removals for the same period totaled **290,603**, roughly seven percent above FY2024's 271,484 ([TRAC Report 767](#)). Representative Chip Roy demanded the underlying methodology on June 10, 2026 and noted that ICE's public dashboard had not been updated since November 2024 ([letter](#)). Documented CBP Home departures number about 25,000 ([ProPublica](#)). The encounter and



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apprehension declines are hard agency counts and are treated as such here; the removal totals are treated as an estimate carrying a live methodological dispute.

3.6.7 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the SAVE system

Citizenship and Immigration Services holds the one federal database that the entire citizenship-verification architecture depends on. Three of the five DHS grant conditions assessed above require its use: verification of the citizenship of registrants matched against the SAVE system within 120 days of award acceptance, and verification of the citizenship of all poll workers and election-system personnel. The Civil Rights Division maintains a memorandum of understanding with the Department for SAVE use in voter registration and list maintenance, and the Acting Chief of the Voting Section stated at a March hearing in the Rhode Island case that the Department planned to run collected voter-roll data "against DHS's SAVE database" ([Brennan Center for Justice](#)).

The agency also issued a policy-manual update on **August 29, 2025** addressing voter registration and false claims to United States citizenship in the good-moral-character context ([U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)). The White House asserts that SAVE processing identified **28,000 noncitizens illegally registered across 25 states out of more than 68 million records processed**, and approximately **278,000** noncitizens registered to vote in federal elections ([White House](#); [CNN](#)). Those are official assertions rather than audited findings, and the underlying analysis has not been published — a transparency gap that cuts against the government's own case, because the figures would be far more useful to state election officials as a verifiable dataset than as a press assertion.

3.6.8 Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency is the component whose election role was reduced rather than expanded, and the reduction is catalogued here in inventory form because it is assessed substantively under Vector 05 and Vector 07. On **February 14, 2025** the Department partially terminated its cooperative agreement with the **Center for Internet Security**; on **March 3, 2025** the agency notified election officials that it was cutting all funding for the **Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center**, which was completely defunded, and it cut **\$10 million** from the multi-state center's activities; the cooperative agreement itself ended on **September 30, 2025** ([Votebeat](#); [The Record](#); [Infosecurity Magazine](#)). The agency's stated reason was "a need to eliminate overlap and redirect resources," with stakeholder engagement, cyber threat intelligence and incident response deemed "duplicative" and "no longer aligned with department priorities" ([Votebeat](#)). In **February 2025** staff working on countering foreign mis- and disinformation, together with a team of **ten regional election security advisers**, were placed on



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administrative leave ([NPR](#)), and Acting Director Bridget Bean circulated a memorandum ordering a review of every program, service, action and position related to countering mis-, dis- and malinformation, with results due **March 6, 2025** ([StateScoop](#)). The administration's **FY2027** budget proposal would eliminate the agency's election security program entirely, including information-sharing support and the election security advisers ([Nextgov](#)).

The two readings, and the tempering. On the administration's account, and on this report card's Vector 07 analysis, what was terminated was a federally funded private aggregation point that constituted a single point of failure in a deliberately decentralized system, and its removal is a structural gain. On the countervailing account, local election offices now have no structured federal threat-information channel at all in the run-up to a federal election. Both are true, and the resolution is that the first is a durable architectural change while the second is a capability gap the government chose not to fill by any other means — no substitute channel has been established. The capacity loss also compounds a pre-existing deficit rather than trimming excess: the Department's own Inspector General found in **OIG-25-38 of September 11, 2025** that the Cybersecurity Division was **33 percent understaffed in FY2021** with vacancies at **38 percent as of August 2022** ([Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General](#)). Approximately **1,000 departures — about one-third of staff — had occurred by June 2025** ([Axios](#)), and an appropriations lapse on **February 14, 2026** furloughed **62 percent** of remaining staff, leaving roughly 888 operational personnel ([Cloud Security Alliance](#)).

3.7 Department of State

Two institutions within the Department of State built the doctrine and the money pipeline behind the information-control vector, and both are now gone. This is the largest structural change in the entire inventory that no court has reversed and no state can decline.

The Global Engagement Center. The Center was created by § 1287 of the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act, [P.L. 114-328](#), codified at 22 U.S.C. § 2656 note. Its authorization expired **December 23, 2024** when the December 21, 2024 continuing resolution omitted reauthorization, and the State Department confirmed the Center is closed ([Congressional Research Service IN12475](#)). Residual functions moved to the Office of the Coordinator for Global Engagement, designated R/FIMI, which the Secretary of State closed on **April 16, 2025**, stating that the office "cost taxpayers more than \$50 million per year, spent millions of dollars to actively silence and censor the voices of Americans they were supposed to be serving," and concluding "That ends today" ([State Department](#)). On **September 17, 2025** the Department announced that "The United States has ceased all



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Frameworks to Counter Foreign State Information Manipulation and any associated instruments implemented by the former administration" ([State Department](#)).

Why that closure is an election-security action rather than a foreign-policy one is a matter of record, not inference, and the documentary chain is specific. On October 14, 2020 a Center liaison emailed Stanford Internet Observatory and University of Washington researchers with the line "Our colleagues at the Department of Homeland Security/CISA recommended we talk to you." The following day a meeting invitation went out titled "GEC/Election Integrity Partnership." On December 4, 2020 a Center analyst thanked the Partnership's principals "for allowing me to participate in the Election Integrity Partnership with the GEC." The Partnership's own report lists the Center among its reporting organizations, and Stanford's counsel conceded on June 14, 2023 that "the GEC submitted tickets through the Jira system." **That is a federal foreign-facing information agency inside a domestic election-speech triage system during a federal election.** On August 21, 2026 the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy published a nineteen-post release titled "GEC's participation in 2020 election censorship-by-proxy operation," asserting the Partnership "functioned as a government censorship-by-proxy operation." The characterization is contested: an analysis published by [Lawfare](#) argues the released material does not show a censorship operation, noting that of 639 in-scope Partnership tickets no action was taken on 65 percent while 21 percent were labeled, 13 percent removed and 1 percent soft-blocked, that a House report released fifteen Center tickets of which thirteen named foreign outlets and six were ignored, and that the Center was tagged on 2.5 percent of tickets. Former officials told [The Guardian](#) that "There seems to be absolutely nothing here," describing the Center as roughly \$61 million a year and about 120 staff.

The judicial capstone. On **April 8, 2026** a consent decree was entered in *The Daily Wire, LLC, FDRLST Media, LLC, and State of Texas v. U.S. Department of State*, No. 6:23-cv-00609 (JDK), E.D. Tex., operative until **January 31, 2036**. It bars the Department from using tools to "suppress, censor, demonetize, or downgrade the constitutionally protected speech of Americans or domestic media outlets," bars asking third parties to do so, bars funding or promoting fact-checking, media-credibility-rating, counter-disinformation, or media-literacy tools for that purpose, and requires best efforts to remove the Center-run @DisinfoCloud account and related materials ([consent decree text](#)). Plaintiffs serve as compliance monitors through 2036 with annual reporting and required employee trainings in 2030 and 2035 ([Daily Wire](#)). This is a ten-year structural constraint obtained by consent rather than by contested judgment, which makes it more durable than an injunction.

The subsidy trail that closure ended. The Center's FY2023 resources ran \$57 million in diplomatic engagement plus \$5 million for Countering PRC Influence and \$33 million in Ukraine



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supplemental funds. A cooperative agreement with Park Advisors exceeded \$6 million from September 25, 2018 through December 31, 2021, including \$1,179,000 for Disinfo Cloud, which catalogued 365 technologies for 1,883 password-protected users. Subawards went to the Atlantic Council at \$150,000, Babel Street at \$250,000, DROG at \$250,000, NewsGuard at \$50,000, Trend Micro Check at \$175,000, Cyabra at \$75,000, AIfluence at \$83,000, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue at \$50,000, and the Global Disinformation Index at \$100,000, among others. Atlantic Council receipts exceeded \$1.9 million since FY2018, including more than \$215,000 to its Digital Forensic Research Lab — a core Election Integrity Partnership member. The Global Disinformation Index's own application to the National Endowment for Democracy stated that it aimed "to disrupt, defund and down-rank disinformation sites." A House Small Business Committee review found "no firewall ensuring that Federal resources were not used to develop and promote technologies with domestic impacts," with 33 tools reaching operational testing across 25 participant offices.

3.8 United States Agency for International Development

The Agency for International Development. Executive Order 14169, Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid, paused all foreign assistance on January 20, 2025. A near-total freeze took effect January 24, the agency website went dark January 27, and on February 6, 2025 the administration moved to retain 294 of more than 10,000 positions. On March 10, 2025 the Secretary of State announced cancellation of **83 percent** of agency-managed programs, roughly 5,200 awards. Reduction-in-force notices went to Congress March 28, 2025, and on **July 1, 2025** the Secretary stated that "as of July 1st, USAID will officially cease to implement foreign assistance," with remaining programs administered by the State Department. The agency had managed more than \$35 billion in FY2024 ([Congressional Research Service IF10261](#)). One precision is required and is stated here rather than glossed: the agency's authorizing codification at 22 U.S.C. § 6563 was never repealed. The Research Service describes the agency as dismantled, not abolished. The operating agency is gone; the statute that created the office remains on the books and could be repopulated by a successor administration.

The agency's own doctrinal record is what ties its dismantlement to this assessment. Its February 2021 Disinformation Primer, produced by its Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance and reviewed by the Global Engagement Center, endorsed "Advertiser Outreach" at page 49 — "In order to disrupt the funding and financial incentive to disinform, attention has also turned to the advertising industry," reasoning that "cutting this financial support found in the ad-tech space would obstruct disinformation actors." At page 61 it asserted that "there is also a right not to be disinformed." Its recommended toolkit included content moderation, source labeling, provision of



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"metadata to trusted partners," and, under "What could national governments do?", "Regulate ad networks" and "Enforce minimum levels of public service news on to the platforms." A federal agency document articulating an affirmative right against receiving speech, and recommending economic strangulation of publishers as an "emerging solution," is the doctrinal ancestor of advertiser-blacklisting practice. It surfaced through freedom-of-information litigation rather than by publication.

The money followed the doctrine. Internews Network received at least approximately \$397.0 million in agency assistance awards across 62 awards plus roughly \$297,900 in contracts, including I-STREAM at \$81,268,479 and Greater Internet Freedom at \$21,965,000. A March 4, 2026 Inspector General audit, 8-121-26-012-R, covering \$8,099,231 in calendar-2024 expenditures of which \$7,457,500 was agency-funded, lists State Department cooperative agreements written for the Global Engagement Center alongside the agency's own — the cleanest documentary link in the record between an agency grantee and Center programming. Zinc Network Ltd held the \$9,318,530 Georgia Information Integrity Program; a September 26, 2024 audit questioned \$516,517 of its costs and found six instances of material noncompliance. Award 7200AA18CA00059, \$4,792,898 to the University of Notre Dame, funded an artificial-intelligence "Misinformation Early Warning System" with subawards describing "DATA MINING OF THE DISINFORMATION ACROSS SEARCH AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS / RUNNING HIGHLY TARGETED CAMPAIGNS... / MEASURING BEHAVIOR CHANGE FROM USERS." In 2025 the agency allocated \$268 million to independent media and had been funding more than 700 news outlets and 6,000 journalists. Its principal election channel, the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS), received approximately \$3.794 billion across 256 assistance awards.

The rescission and its stated rationale. On August 29, 2025 the administration executed a \$5 billion pocket rescission including **\$322 million** from the Democracy Fund, with the stated rationale that "This action would eliminate programs that have conducted censorship operations and meddled in elections in foreign countries," alongside \$3.2 billion in Development Assistance ([White House](#)). This is the closest item in the record to a United States government statement that democracy-assistance money funded censorship operations and election meddling. It is an executive characterization by a successor administration, not an adjudicated finding, and its evidentiary weight depends on the underlying program list, which has not been published.

3.9 Department of the Treasury

The Treasury Department's election-relevant activity runs through sanctions authority and financial-intelligence authority rather than through election law. Its cartel-finance program is the component on which Vector 06 turns.



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3.9.1 Cartel finance and the migrant-services funding channel

The designations and the financial architecture. Secretary of State Rubio designated eight organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists on February 20, 2025 — **Tren de Aragua, MS-13, Cártel de Sinaloa, CJNG, Carteles Unidos, Cártel del Noreste, Cártel del Golfo, and La Nueva Familia Michoacana** ([Federal Register, 90 FR 10030](#)). On June 25, 2025 FinCEN issued the **first orders ever made** under 31 U.S.C. § 2313a against CIBanco, InterCam Banco, and Vector Casa de Bolsa ([FinCEN](#)). Southwest border Geographic Targeting Orders imposed a **\$200** currency-transaction reporting threshold across thirty ZIP codes in California and Texas from March 2025, later raised to \$1,000 and extended through Arizona and New Mexico, with the current order effective March 7 through September 2, 2026 ([FinCEN FAQs](#)). OFAC designated eleven individuals, two entities, and six Ethereum addresses tied to the Sinaloa Cartel on May 20, 2026 ([OFAC](#)).

The measured effect. FinCEN's August 13, 2026 financial trend analysis found **67,540 Bank Secrecy Act reports involving nearly \$5 billion** in suspected human-smuggling-linked activity for 2023 through 2025, with suspected human-smuggling reports **down 62 percent in 2025**, ninety-seven percent of the dataset filed by money services businesses, and fifty-nine percent of those reports indicating no verifiable familial connection ([FinCEN](#)). FinCEN states directly that "many human smuggling networks generate profit for larger transnational criminal organizations, including Mexico-based drug cartels." That 62 percent decline is the single best available quantitative measure of the border program's effect on illicit revenue, and it is an agency measurement rather than an advocacy estimate.

Judicial drag on this component is significant. On July 13, 2026 the Ninth Circuit affirmed a preliminary injunction against the original Geographic Targeting Order, holding it was likely a "rule" rather than an "order" under the Administrative Procedure Act and likely arbitrary and capricious because FinCEN failed to consider compliance costs, the supporting internal memorandum being "undated, heavily redacted, and apparently an unapproved draft" ([Ninth Circuit ruling summarized](#)). The injunction is limited to the Southern District of California and one judge dissented, but the reasoning is portable and the pattern matches every other vector in this assessment: the instrument was sound in substance and defeated on process.

The funding channel. On April 1, 2025 DHS and FEMA terminated the Shelter and Services Program "effective immediately," invoking 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(a)(2) on the stated ground that "grant programs that support, or have the potential to support, illegal immigration through funding illegal activities or support for illegal aliens that is not consistent with DHS's enforcement focus do not



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effectuate the agency's current priorities," and requiring refund of amounts exceeding the final financial report ([termination packet](#)). The FY2024 program had made **\$640.9 million** available across allocated and competitive rounds, the competitive round alone distributing **\$340.9 million** ([FEMA](#)). Catholic Charities entities accounted for **\$50,407,967** across four competitive awards; Pima County alone lost three awards totaling **\$52,627,402**; and DHS clawed back **\$186 million** from New York City in two tranches in February and April 2025 ([FEMA award table](#); [termination packet](#)). Consistent with the method rule governing this report card, the finding here is the **reduction in funding received by the nongovernmental organizations**, which is documented to the dollar, rather than any assertion about a laundering mechanism.

The claim this report card declines to make. No adjudicated case, indictment, judicial finding, OFAC designation, FinCEN action, or Federal Election Commission matter located in this research connects cartel proceeds to a United States political campaign, an elected official, or a nongovernmental organization. The Congressional Research Service states that "the public record reveals little evidence that foreign money has intruded into U.S. campaigns systematically or decisively," while also noting that because the Federal Election Commission may not publicize enforcement information before cases close, "it is unclear how significant pending civil enforcement cases might be" ([CRS IF10697](#)). Under this document's potential standard the proposition is carried as an unresolved exposure rather than as an established fact, and the administration's actions against it — the designations, the section 2313a orders, the Geographic Targeting Orders, and the Task Force to Eliminate Fraud — are scored for the deterrent and detection value they create against a **potential** channel. They are not scored as the disruption of a proven one, because no such proof is in the record. Stating that plainly is what allows the rest of the financial-influence analysis to carry weight.

3.10 Department of Commerce

The Commerce Department holds the census function, and the census determines the apportionment base. This is the only instrument in the inventory that reallocates political power between states rather than regulating conduct within them.

3.10.1 The census and apportionment dimension

Counting persons unlawfully present in the apportionment base transfers political power between states, and the mechanism is statutory rather than contested. **2 U.S.C. § 2a(a)** requires the President to transmit "the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed," apportioned by the method of equal proportions, and the House has been fixed at 435 seats since 1910 ([U.S. Code](#)). Because the total is fixed, every seat allocated on the basis of a noncitizen population is a seat taken



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from another state — and because electoral votes track House seats, the transfer is simultaneously an apportionment effect and a presidential-election effect. Census data also drove the distribution of **\$2.8 trillion across 353 federal programs** in FY2021 ([Census Bureau](#)), so the same count governs money as well as representation.

The executive action. On August 7, 2025 the President announced that he had instructed the Commerce Department to begin work on a new census excluding people in the country illegally ([Reuters](#)). Under the method rules of this report card that announcement counts as executive action, and it is credited as such. It should not, however, be described as more than it is: **no executive order or presidential memorandum on census apportionment was signed and published in 2025 or 2026**, and the precedent from the first term is unfavorable — the July 21, 2020 Presidential Memorandum directing exclusion of unauthorized immigrants from the apportionment base produced *Trump v. New York*, decided December 18, 2020 ([opinion](#)), and the exclusion was never effected. Border enforcement, by contrast, changes the count itself without requiring any legal theory about who may be counted, which is why it is the more consequential instrument on this dimension.

The magnitude, stated accurately. The seat effect of excluding unlawfully present persons specifically is real but modest, and this document reports the honest number rather than the maximal one. The Center for Immigration Studies finds that illegal immigrants alone redistributed **two seats across four states** in 2020, rising to three seats across five states when their United States-born minor children are included; counting *all* immigrants redistributed seventeen seats across twenty-three states ([Center for Immigration Studies](#)). Pew's analysis of the 2020 apportionment found that exclusion would have cost California two seats instead of one, held Texas to two gains instead of three and Florida to one instead of two, and allowed Alabama, Minnesota, and Ohio each to retain a seat they otherwise lost ([Pew Research Center](#)). A peer-reviewed analysis concludes that **no more than two House seats and three electoral votes** would have shifted between the parties in any year since 1980 ([peer-reviewed study](#)). Two seats and three electoral votes is not a trivial quantity in a closely divided House or a close presidential election, and the effect compounds over a decade because apportionment is decennial. But it is not the double-digit transfer sometimes asserted, and this report card does not assert it.

3.11 Federal Election Commission

The Federal Election Commission is the agency on which the financial-influence vector formally depends, and for sixteen months of the period assessed it has been unable to act at all. Its inclusion in this inventory is necessary precisely because the absence of action is the operative fact.



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Quorum loss. The Congressional Research Service's account, updated **March 2, 2026**, records that **two of six commissioners** remained in office — Shana M. Broussard and Dara Lindenbaum — with **four seats vacant** and **no policymaking quorum**, because the Federal Election Campaign Act requires at least four affirmative votes for most policymaking, regulatory, and enforcement action. This is the **fourth quorum-loss episode** in the Commission's history. The chronology: Sean J. Cooksey resigned **January 20, 2025**; the disputed removal of Chair Ellen L. Weintraub took effect **January 31, 2025**, and she posted the letter "purporting to remove me" on February 6; open meetings on February 13, February 27 and March 13, 2025 were cancelled; Allen Dickerson resigned at term's end on **April 30, 2025**, at which point the **policymaking quorum was lost**; Trainor's resignation took effect **October 3, 2025**, leaving two commissioners ([Congressional Research Service R45160](#)). The Commission's own notice of **March 31, 2026** confirms the continuing absence of a quorum, citing 52 U.S.C. §§ 30106(c) and 30107(a)(6) ([Federal Election Commission](#)), and a further notice to the same effect was filed on **April 24, 2026** ([Federal Election Commission](#)).

The nominations. On **February 11, 2026** the President nominated **Ashley Stow** (term to April 30, 2029) and **Andrew Woodson** (term to April 30, 2031) ([Congressional Research Service R45160](#)). **No source confirms Senate confirmation of either nominee as of September 4, 2026**, and the latest confirmed status is two commissioners and no quorum. Restoring a quorum is a shared responsibility of the President and the Senate; the nominations were made a year after the quorum was lost, and they have not been acted on.

Presidential action directed at the Commission. **Executive Order 14215**, "Ensuring Accountability for All Agencies," signed **February 18, 2025**, provides at **section 7** that "the President and the Attorney General's opinions on questions of law are controlling on all employees" of the executive branch, expressly including independent agencies ([Federal Register public inspection copy](#)). The Democratic National Committee, Senatorial Campaign Committee and Congressional Campaign Committee sued on **February 28, 2025** in the District of Columbia challenging section 7 as applied to the Commission ([Federal Election Commission case summary](#)). Read together with the removal of the Chair, section 7 is the most direct assertion of presidential control over campaign-finance enforcement in the agency's history, and this assessment credits it as executive action of the first order — while noting that its practical effect to date has been to leave the agency unable to enforce anything at all.

What the quorum loss forecloses, and why it matters to this report card. The Texas Attorney General filed a **Petition for Rulemaking** with the Commission concerning alleged straw donations through ActBlue ([Office of the Texas Attorney General](#)). **No enforcement action against**



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ActBlue or WinRed exists, and none can issue: the Commission cannot vote to open or resolve an enforcement matter without four commissioners ([Congressional Research Service R45160](#)). The single most-cited conduit-contribution allegation in the entire financial-influence vector is therefore beyond the reach of the only agency with jurisdiction over it, for the duration of the 2026 cycle. The same constraint forecloses action in the other direction: the Commission's governing precedent on whether corporate press coverage can constitute an in-kind contribution remains its **rejection** of a complaint over a "60 Minutes" broadcast ([Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press](#)), and no 2025–2026 decision revisits it. Campaign-related media conduct, like conduit contributions, is currently unenforceable.

The tempering. It would be inaccurate to score the Commission's paralysis purely as internal drag against the administration, because the administration's own removal of the Chair and its assertion of legal control under section 7 are among the proximate causes of the paralysis, and the twelve-month gap before nominations were submitted is an executive-branch delay. It would be equally inaccurate to score it purely against the administration: the Commission's structural vulnerability to quorum loss is a design feature of the statute, this is the fourth such episode, and confirmation is the Senate's function. What the record establishes is that the agency with exclusive civil jurisdiction over the financial-influence vector will be non-functional through the November 3, 2026 election, and that no other institution has assumed the function.

3.12 Federal Communications Commission

The Commission is included in this inventory because two of its instruments bear directly on Vector 05, and because the administration's use of it in the weeks before this edition was prepared is an exercise of the messaging channel this assessment treats as executive action. Brendan Carr was designated Chairman on **January 20, 2025** ([White House](#)). The Commission has sat at a two-to-one Republican majority with two vacancies, and a further Republican nomination sent to the Senate on **August 7, 2026** would make it three to one ([Politico](#)).

3.12.1 The August 30, 2026 referral and the September 6, 2026 statement on polling

On **August 30, 2026** the President published a statement on Truth Social objecting to a characterization of his primary endorsement record as producing "mixed results," asserting a record of "100% for the U.S. Senate, and 98% for the U.S. House," asking "How can anyone be allowed to say this, working for freely given Public Airwaves?", stating that the host "will be reported to the FCC for rebuke or punishment," and adding that "I hope that Chairman Brendan Carr, and the fine people of



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his Commission, will take this Threat to our Country very seriously" ([Los Angeles Times](#); [The Hill](#); [CNN](#)). The two results cited are real: Darline Graham won the South Carolina Republican Senate runoff and Mike Mazzei the Oklahoma gubernatorial runoff, both on **August 25, 2026** ([Reuters](#); [Politico](#)). An independent count of the underlying record put the primary win rate at about **96 percent**, and 100 percent in Senate Republican primaries ([The Hill](#)).

On **September 6, 2026**, on Fox News's "The Sunday Briefing," Chairman Carr said of the matter that "I think President Trump is over the target, and we're looking at a lot of actions," framed the authority in public-trustee terms — broadcasters "get billions of dollars in taxpayer, effectively, subsidized distribution. And what they're supposed to do in exchange is operate in the public interest, not some sort of narrow partisan interest" — and then made the statement that matters most for this assessment: "the FCC **may** put guidance out soon to remind broadcasters about their obligations with respect to not airing fake polls, particularly if they're done to suppress people heading into the fall" ([Fox News](#); [The Hill](#); [Washington Times](#)).

What is and is not established, stated precisely. The quotations above are confirmed in mainstream reporting and are properly credited as messaging directed at a documented suppression mechanism — the use of published survey results to shape turnout expectations, which is the same mechanism this report card examines under media drag in Part III. What is **not** established is any Commission action. As of the date of this edition **no Commission notice, notice of inquiry, order, guidance document, or docket concerning polling or "fake polls" has been published**, and searches of the Commission's own document repository return nothing on the subject; the trade press describes the agency as "preparing to warn" broadcasters and as one that "may soon issue guidance" ([Policyband](#)). The advocacy outlet that first drew attention to the interview characterized the Chairman as having "confirmed" a program of action ([The Gateway Pundit](#), an advocacy source); the word the Chairman used was "may," and he declined to say whether the host named by the President would be sanctioned ([Washington Times](#)). This assessment therefore credits an intention announced by the responsible official and scores no instrument, which is the same discipline applied to the outstanding vulnerability report and to the unreleased technical examinations elsewhere in this document.

3.12.2 The wider Commission record on broadcast news content

The polling statement did not arrive in isolation. On **January 22, 2025** the Chairman reinstated complaints against ABC, CBS, and NBC arising from 2024 election coverage that the bureaus had dismissed days earlier, on the ground that they had been dismissed "prematurely based on an insufficient investigatory record" ([FCC DA 25-85](#)). The CBS matter proceeded as **MB Docket No. 25-**



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73, opened for comment on **February 5, 2026** ([FCC DA 25-107](#)); no published disposition of that docket has been located. Approval of the Skydance-Paramount transaction on **July 24, 2025** carried commitments to viewpoint diversity, to "fair, unbiased, and fact-based" news, and to a two-year ombudsman for bias complaints, over the dissent of the Commission's sole Democratic member ([FCC 25-43](#)). A Media Bureau public notice of **January 21, 2026** advised that the equal-opportunities rule may reach candidate appearances on talk programming ([Wiley](#), a law-firm advisory). A seven-page public notice of **May 28, 2026** set out the consequences the Commission associates with the public-interest standard, including conditioned or short-term renewal, forced early renewal, and designation for hearing; an order of **April 28, 2026** compelled early license renewal for ABC's eight owned-and-operated stations ([Wiley](#), a law-firm advisory). In March 2026 the Chairman stated that broadcast licenses are "not a property right" and that revocation was "on the table" ([Reuters](#)).

The countervailing record on this instrument is substantial and is carried in full. The Commission's own published statement of the news-distortion policy confines it to **deliberate** distortion of a **significant** event, requires extrinsic evidence such as an instruction from management or an outtake, and states that "[w]ithout documented evidence, the FCC generally cannot intervene" ([FCC](#)); the Congressional Research Service dates the policy to 1969 and confirms that an allegation of falsity is insufficient ([CRS IF13130](#)). The Communications Act denies the Commission "the power of censorship" and forbids any regulation "which shall interfere with the right of free speech by means of radio communication" ([47 U.S.C. § 326](#)). No broadcast license has been revoked in over four decades ([Reuters](#)). The September 2025 episode in which the Chairman's "easy way or the hard way" remark preceded the suspension of a late-night program ended with the program restored within a week and the Chairman denying that he had threatened any license, saying the account was mischaracterized ([Guardian](#)). Commissioner Anna Gomez has dissented throughout and told a House subcommittee on **January 14, 2026** that the Commission was asserting "an apparent roving mandate to police speech that this Administration does not like" through an "undefined and unchecked" public-interest standard ([House Energy and Commerce testimony](#)), and said of the August 2026 referral that the Commission "has no authority to punish journalists this administration doesn't like" ([CNN](#)). Thirteen former Commission chairs and officials of both parties, including three Republican former chairmen, filed on **July 28, 2026** calling the early-renewal proceeding "unprecedented in the history of the Federal Communications Commission" and "a grave violation of both the Communications Act and the Constitution" ([Protect Democracy](#), an advocacy organization; [Guardian](#)). The chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, of the President's own party, has said that "it is not the FCC's role to be the speech police" ([Politico](#)). And the instrument is now in court: ABC and Disney, joined by affiliates, sued the Commission and the Chairman in the District of Columbia on **August 18, 2026** on First



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Amendment grounds ([NPR](#)); the Commission moved to dismiss on prematurity and venue grounds in early September, with argument set for **October 6, 2026** ([Los Angeles Times](#)). No merits ruling has issued.

3.12.3 Commission actions reaching election infrastructure rather than content

Two lines of Commission action touch election mechanics rather than editorial judgment, and both are more concrete than the content docket. On artificial-voice robocalls, the Commission held in a declaratory ruling of **February 2, 2024** that artificial-intelligence voices are "artificial" within the meaning of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act ([FCC 24-17](#)), and on **September 26, 2024** issued a **\$6,000,000** forfeiture order against the operative responsible for the New Hampshire primary deepfake calls ([FCC](#)); the carrier that transmitted them settled for **\$1,000,000** with first-of-their-kind compliance terms on **August 21, 2024** ([FCC consent decree](#)). No comparable enforcement action in the 2025–2026 period has been located. The companion rulemaking on disclosure of artificial-intelligence-generated content in political advertising, **MB Docket No. 24-211**, has not advanced past its **July 2024** notice of proposed rulemaking, from which the present Chairman dissented as a commissioner ([FCC 24-74](#)); it reaches neither digital advertising nor social platforms. On the alerting system, a report and order adopted **June 25, 2026** by a unanimous Commission imposes authentication, patching, and network-segmentation requirements on Emergency Alert System participants, effective **September 29, 2026** ([Federal Register](#)). None of these instruments carries an election-specific provision, and none of them is scored as a vector-level action; they are recorded because they are the only published Commission work in this period with a demonstrable effect on the integrity of election-adjacent communications.

3.13 United States Postal Service

The rule "Ballot Mail for Federal Elections," [91 FR 54966](#), effective August 21, 2026, added Domestic Mail Manual § 705.24 under claimed authority of 39 U.S.C. § 401, implementing EO 14399. Its operational core was a voter-unique serialized Intelligent Mail barcode on outbound and return federal ballot envelopes, a USPS portal, a Mail-In and Absentee Participation List holding voter name, address, both barcodes, and originating state, pre-acceptance verification by USPS, and USPS authority to refuse or return non-compliant ballot mail.

Judge Indira Talwani entered Document 218 on August 27, 2026, jointly in *California v. USPS*, No. 1:26-cv-13917-IT, and *League of Women Voters of Massachusetts v. Trump*, No. 1:26-cv-11549-IT. The form of relief is "an emergency fourteen-day stay of the implementation or enforcement" of



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enumerated sections, "as to elections occurring before or on November 3, 2026." **There is no geographic limitation in the order** — it restrains the provisions as such, not merely as applied to the twenty-four plaintiff jurisdictions, and is therefore effectively nationwide. The stay expires on or about **September 10, 2026**. The order bars "no further preparatory steps," requires counsel notice within twenty-four hours under penalty of contempt, and leaves the preliminary-injunction motions under advisement. The preliminary-injunction hearing is set for September 3 at 9 a.m., and the Postal Service is appealing to the First Circuit.

Precise scope, provision by provision:

DMM provision	Substance	Status under the order
705.24.1	Definitions	Operative
705.24.2	Optional 90-day pre-mailing notice	Operative
705.24.3.1	Outbound envelope standards, serialized voter-unique barcode, design review	Restrained to the extent mandatory
705.24.3.2	Return envelope standards, serialized barcode	Restrained to the extent mandatory
705.24.3.3	Mailer responsibility for barcode creation	Operative
705.24.3.4	Recommendations	Operative
705.24.4.1	Portal registration two business days before mailing	Restrained to the extent mandatory
705.24.4.2(a)–(f)	Mail-In and Absentee Participation List enrollment; the voter-level federal database; subsection (f) certification gate	Restrained to the extent mandatory, in full
705.24.4.3	USPS furnishes state participation lists on or about election day	Operative
705.24.5.1	Pre-acceptance verification by USPS	Restrained in full
705.24.5.2	Authorized verification	First two sentences restrained; remainder operative, including the disclaimer that acceptance does not constitute verified compliance
705.24.5.3(a)	Return of non-compliant ballot mail to mailer	Restrained
705.24.5.3(b)	Further review of non-compliant mail	Restrained



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DMM provision	Substance	Status under the order
705.24.5.3(c)	No USPS responsibility for resulting delays	Restrained
705.24.5.3(d)	Duty to comply with postal laws	Operative
705.24.5.4	Section 24.5 inapplicable to return ballot mail	Operative
705.24.6	Non-interference	Operative

Three clarifications on scope. The rule contains **no mail-class or service-standard provision, no postmark or receipt-deadline provision, and no separate state certification provision** — the only certification is the mailer certification at 24.4.2(f). USPS told the court it "will not determine voter eligibility, ballot content, mailing or receipt deadlines, or ballot-counting procedures" ([New York Times](#)).

Net effect: every operational lever is stayed. The mandatory serialized barcode, the portal, the voter-level participation database, USPS pre-acceptance verification, and USPS refusal authority are all suspended. What remains operative is definitional, optional, advisory, and disclaimer scaffolding, plus the USPS obligation to furnish participation lists that will have no data behind them while 24.4.2 is stayed. The court found the Service lacked statutory authority under § 401 and made a "feigned compliance" finding regarding earlier orders.

3.14 Government-wide personnel and workforce actions

Personnel action is the instrument the administration used most heavily and the one this assessment finds hardest to score, because the same numbers support two incompatible readings. The rule adopted here, and applied consistently in Part III, is to state the government-wide figures, state the administration's own on-the-record rationale, state the adjudicated evidence for that rationale, state the countervailing evidence, and then say which parts of the claim the record supports and which it does not.

The government-wide figures. The Government Accountability Office's report **GAO-26-108583**, issued **June 17, 2026**, records **377,722 separations across the 22 CFO Act agencies** between January 2025 and January 2026 — a **17.6 percent** separation rate — against 127,360 hires. By agency: **DHS 27,934 (12.1 percent)**, **DOJ 16,334 (14.6 percent)**, **State 6,724 (22.8 percent)**, **Treasury including the IRS 31,180 (30.6 percent)** ([GAO-26-108583](#)). Total staffing at those



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agencies fell by more than **255,000, or 11.3 percent**, during 2025 ([FEDweek](#)); approximately **144,000** employees accepted deferred resignation in the first half of 2025, and the Office of Personnel Management stated that roughly **317,000** employees left during the year ([Government Executive](#)). Reduction-in-force actions rose from **46 in FY2024 to roughly 10,700 in 2025** ([OpenFeds](#)).

The administration's own stated rationale, which the record requires be quoted rather than paraphrased. Executive Order 14171, "Restoring Accountability to Policy-Influencing Positions Within the Federal Workforce," signed **January 20, 2025** and published at **90 FR 8625**, states in its findings: "there have been numerous and well-documented cases of career Federal employees resisting and undermining the policies and directives of their executive leadership"; that such employees "are required to faithfully implement administration policies... Failure to do so is grounds for dismissal"; and that **"only 41 percent of civil service supervisors are confident that they can remove an employee who engaged in insubordination"** ([White House](#)). Secretary Noem stated on **February 25, 2025**: "I have found some leakers. We are continuing to get more. They will be fired. There will be consequences," adding, "it's amazing how these bureaucrats, who have an agenda to stop the work that we're doing..." and describing the use of polygraphs and digital searches ([Denver Gazette](#)).

The adjudicated evidence that a significant obstruction problem exists. This report card does not treat the resistance premise as mere assertion, because part of it is proven in court. **Nathan Vilas Laatsch**, an information-technology specialist in the Defense Intelligence Agency's *Insider Threat Division*, was arrested **May 29, 2025** and **pleaded guilty** to attempted transmission of national defense information to a foreign government ([Justice Department](#)). **Asif William Rahman**, a former CIA analyst, pleaded guilty and was sentenced on **June 11, 2025 to 37 months** ([BBC](#)). **Charles Littlejohn**, an IRS contractor, was sentenced to **five years** for leaking tax records affecting **more than 400,000 taxpayers** ([Politico](#); [Internal Revenue Service](#)). **Courtney Williams**, a former Army special-mission-unit employee, was indicted in April 2026 under 18 U.S.C. § 793(d) for allegedly leaking classified information to a journalist — a charge, not a conviction, as the Department's own release states ([Justice Department](#)). A federal workforce that produces convicted leakers inside its own insider-threat division, and a disclosure reaching 400,000 taxpayers, is not a workforce whose loyalty can be assumed. The January 2026 disclosure of data on approximately 4,500 immigration agents was attributed in reporting to a departmental whistleblower ([summary of the incident](#)), and a senior Customs and Border Protection official was fired for allegedly leaking personnel information ([Fox News](#)).



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What the record supports, and what it does not. It supports the finding that leaking, unauthorized disclosure, and unauthorized use of government data by federal employees occurred at a scale and seniority that no responsible executive could ignore, and that a substantial portion of the federal workforce operated in open opposition to the administration's stated objectives — a proposition the volume of anonymously sourced reporting throughout this period itself evidences, since each such story requires a federal employee willing to disclose. This is not merely inferential. A pre-2020-election training session, "Democracy Defense,"² convened by Democracy Kitchen and Feds for Democracy and attended exclusively by self-identified current federal employees, produced a facilitator instructing attendees to "slow walk" executive-order compliance, to request directives "in writing," and to organize via encrypted Signal channels specifically to evade detection by "your boss" — language that is direct, contemporaneous, first-person evidence of an intent to obstruct lawful direction from the executive branch, surfaced by whistleblower disclosure rather than inference from reporting patterns. The same session dismissed Hatch Act constraints as inapplicable to what it termed "non-partisan democracy protection," and explicitly proposed mobilizing the federal workforce's four million employees as a coordinated bloc to determine "what is normal and allowable" independent of election outcome — evidence that the ideological infrastructure for bureaucratic resistance was organized, not spontaneous.

What the record does not contain, even with this training material entered into evidence, is an Inspector General finding or sworn congressional testimony establishing that a named federal employee refused to implement a specific lawful directive during 2025 or 2026. The Democracy Defense session documents coaching and intent — a template for obstruction — but documents no named individual's execution of that template against an identified 2025–2026 order; it corroborates capability and predisposition, not a completed act tied to a specific directive and employee. The administration's own rulemaking rests its evidentiary case not on any such finding but on an advocacy compilation, the America First Policy Institute's January 8, 2025 report "Tales from the Swamp: How Federal Bureaucrats Resisted President Trump," cited in the Office of Personnel Management's proposed Schedule Policy/Career rule (Federal Register public inspection copy). The distinction between proven disclosure offenses, documented pre-conditioning toward obstruction, and unproven refusal to execute a specific directive is preserved throughout this assessment.

The countervailing evidence on effect, carried in full. Reductions degraded capability in at least three documented instances, and in one the government itself reversed course. The Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration found that the IRS had to move roughly 1,200 workers back

² Seditious Conspiracy by Federal Employees, <https://electioncrimebureau.com/sc-pre-27/>



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into Taxpayer Services after more than 11,000 left that division (Journal of Accountancy); every IRS reduction-in-force round was cancelled by court order — a first round of 294 notices in April 2025 and a second of 274 plus 122 (TIGTA 2026IER009); and an independent analysis found that 20,557 deferred-resignation separations were subsequently backfilled, undercutting the claim of net savings (Partnership for Public Service). On the litigation side, the Supreme Court stayed a Northern District of California injunction blocking roughly forty reductions across seventeen agencies on July 8, 2025 in *Trump v. AFGE*, and stayed an order reinstating more than 16,000 probationary employees on April 8, 2025 in *OPM v. AFGE* (SCOTUSblog). A contrary characterization was placed before the House Judiciary Committee on January 31, 2025 by Justice Connection, asserting that career Department attorneys were being punished for lawful work (House Judiciary Committee Democrats).

The instruments. Beyond EO 14171, the operative instruments are the "Fork in the Road" deferred-resignation memorandum of **January 28, 2025**; the Office of Personnel Management's **proposed rule** implementing Schedule Policy/Career, published **April 23, 2025** ([Federal Register public inspection copy](#)); and the **final rule**, "Improving Performance, Accountability and Responsiveness in the Civil Service," published **February 6, 2026**, effective thirty days later, which the Office states bars use of the new schedule for reductions in force or loyalty tests and moves prohibited-personnel-practice enforcement from the Office of Special Counsel to agencies ([Office of Personnel Management](#)).

3.15 Funding contraction affecting election-adjacent organizations

The most consequential funding action against the election-operations ecosystem was not aimed at a grantmaker but at an information-sharing body. DHS partially terminated its \$10 million agreement with the Center for Internet Security on February 14, 2025, and the **Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center closed** as a result. The Center's separate \$70,017,000 DHS agreement expired unrenewed on September 29, 2025. Albert network sensors for election offices ended October 1, 2025.

This is best understood as the elimination of a single point of failure rather than the loss of a safeguard. Albert sensors were Dell servers running Oracle Unbreakable Linux, deployed by a private 501(c)(3) to state, local, tribal, and territorial entities in all fifty states, sitting at the network boundary of the internal networks that host Election Management System servers. Their advertised functions were NetFlow monitoring, Suricata-based intrusion detection, and **deep packet inspection** — and the memoranda of agreement covering a reported 98 percent of the nation's election infrastructure granted access to "any communications or data transiting" those networks, which necessarily includes user accounts, privileges, and credentials ([Lets Fix Stuff](#)). All of that traffic was shared with a single



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private operations center, the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center, with Amazon Web Services providing load balancing and query services ([Lets Fix Stuff](#)).

The architectural consequence is the point. Voting systems that election officials described as air-gapped were in fact monitored at the packet level by a homogeneous nationwide sensor fleet operated by one nonprofit and its subcontractors, with the collected transactions consolidated into a single data center. Whatever the defensive intent, that is a concentration of the most sensitive election data in American elections behind one set of credentials, reachable by every employee, contractor, and partner of the operating entity and exposed to any domestic or foreign adversary who compromised that entity. Distributed election administration exists precisely so that no single failure is national in scope; the Albert and Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center architecture reintroduced exactly that failure mode, and the government paid for it. Terminating the agreements and ending the sensor program dissolved the aggregation point. It is the one action in this entire inventory that reduced the national attack surface outright rather than adding process on top of it.

ActBlue. Three corrections to the common account are required by the record. First, there is **no indictment of ActBlue** — no entity, officer, or employee has been charged anywhere. The exposure is civil and congressional: 146 Fifth Amendment invocations across five employees in the congressional inquiry, a contempt threat on June 22, 2026, a July 22, 2025 subpoena to the chief executive, and a Texas deceptive-trade-practices suit that was **enjoined on June 11, 2026** by Judge Richard Stearns of the District of Massachusetts, who found "The lawsuit was filed in retaliation" ([Reuters](#)). Second, fundraising **never declined**: the platform reported \$586 million in the second quarter of 2026 — \$388 million federal, \$150 million state and local, \$48 million to charities — across 15 million contributions averaging \$39, with 573,000 first-time donors and volume up 14 percent against the comparable 2022 quarter, its best non-presidential quarter on record ([ActBlue](#)); cumulative volume since 2004 exceeds \$19 billion. Third, the real damage is operational and financial. The entire legal and compliance function departed by March 2025 — the general counsel resigned February 24, 2025 and a senior compliance official was locked out February 26 — and the organization has spent more than \$17 million on legal consulting in seventeen months, with cycle operating expenses exceeding \$93 million against roughly \$67 million for the entire 2022 cycle.

Controls actually adopted, which is the part that bears on the vector. The scrutiny produced concrete changes to the payment path, and these are the measurable security outcome regardless of whether a charge ever issues. The platform now states that "**All credit card donations must include a valid CVV**"; that donations originating from foreign IP addresses, bearing foreign mailing addresses, or drawn on foreign-issued card bank identification numbers "**are rejected**"; and that it



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runs address verification alongside a fraud-detection tool tracking more than 140 signals per transaction ([ActBlue Help Center](#)). Each of those is a direct answer to a specific documented gap. The congressional record establishes that as of November 27, 2023 the platform did **not** require a card verification value, and that internal rules were loosened twice during 2024 ([Committee on House Administration, "Fraud on ActBlue" Part I, April 2, 2025](#)). The foreign-origin rejection rule is the operative barrier against direct foreign contributions to candidate campaigns, prohibited by 52 U.S.C. § 30121; the CVV requirement is the standard defense against card-testing and stolen-card use; and the 140-signal fraud tool is the mechanism by which structured small-dollar sequencing from a single source across many nominal donors — the practice examined in the congressional inquiry as contribution structuring — becomes detectable at the processor rather than only at the post-hoc disclosure stage. Merchant-processing oversight tightened alongside these rules, with the second congressional report of April 20, 2026 detailing the departure of the entire compliance function that had been responsible for them.

Federal and state scrutiny did not shut the platform down, reduce its throughput, or produce a charge, but it did force the adoption of card-verification, foreign-origin rejection, and multi-signal fraud screening that had demonstrably not been in place during the 2020 and 2024 cycles, and it stripped out the compliance leadership layer in the process. On the specific question directed at governance, the public record establishes mass departures of legal and compliance staff and the loss of the general counsel; it does **not** establish a documented en-bloc resignation of the board of directors with named individuals and dates, and no such event is asserted here.

Southern Poverty Law Center. The organization had almost no federal money to lose. Federal spending records show two State Department awards, both with \$0.00 obligated and both ended in 2022, and zero federal contracts. The actual damage is different and arguably more severe, and the most consequential piece of it is the loss of access rather than the loss of money.

On **October 3, 2025** the FBI Director severed all Bureau connections to the organization, describing it as a "partisan smear operation" and rejecting reliance on "agenda-driven intelligence from external organizations"; the Anti-Defamation League was cut the same day ([Axios](#)). The significance for this assessment is what that severance terminated. A private advocacy organization that supplies threat designations to a federal law-enforcement agency sits inside the intelligence cycle: it receives briefings, tasking context, and feedback on which of its designations are being acted upon, and its published lists acquire quasi-official weight because a federal agency is known to consume them. Severance ends all of it at once. The organization no longer receives sensitive or law-enforcement-channel information, no longer sits in the liaison meetings that shaped which domestic groups were treated as threats, and



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its designations no longer carry the implicit federal endorsement that gave them force with platforms, payment processors, and employers. It is now an outside commentator with no line into the federal threat picture. Whatever one's view of the organization's work, the removal of a private ideological filter from the front end of federal domestic-threat assessment is a structural change, not a symbolic one.

Criminal exposure followed. A federal grand jury returned eleven counts on **April 21, 2026** covering 2014 through 2023 and more than \$3 million ([DOJ](#)). A second superseding indictment returned August 11 and unsealed August 12, 2026 added a defendant and extended the scheme to 2007 through 2023 and more than \$4 million ([DOJ, Middle District of Alabama](#)). Counts one through six charge wire fraud, seven through ten false statements to a federally insured bank arising from accounts opened in fictitious entity names to pay purported "field sources," and count eleven concealment money laundering; trial is set for **October 5, 2026** ([case analysis](#)). Fidelity and Vanguard donor-advised funds paused disbursements. Revenue nonetheless rose to \$149.6 million in FY2025 against net assets of \$886.6 million. An indictment is an accusation and the defendants are presumed innocent; the loss recorded here is loss of federal access, referral pipeline, and reputational standing, not grant loss.

Grantmakers. The Center for Tech and Civic Life, the Brennan Center, Arabella-affiliated entities, and Open Society Foundations hold zero federal prime awards; the League of Women Voters' largest federal award is a \$10,000 Election Assistance Commission grant. Federal defunding is therefore not a mechanism that reaches these organizations. The mechanisms that do reach them are the grantee-lobbying memorandum, donor-advised-fund pauses, tax-exempt scrutiny, and the general reputational effect of federal action.

Aggregate rescissions. The Rescissions Act of 2025 cancelled \$8.973 billion, and the Supreme Court's 6–3 pocket-rescission order of September 26, 2025 permitted roughly \$4 billion more to lapse.

4 Part II — Vector-by-vector assessment

4.1 Vector 01 — Election record integrity

This vector is assessed across five domains of the record chain, in the order a ballot moves through it: the roll on which a voter appears, the history attached to that voter, the ballot itself, the tally into which the ballot is counted, and the preservation of every artifact of the foregoing. Federal action reached all five in this period, with sharply different results in each.



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4.1.1 Voter roll integrity

4.1.1.1 Actions Taken

EO 14248 and EO 14399 both attack the front end of the record chain by requiring documentary proof of citizenship. DHS grant Conditions 3, 4, and 5 attack it by requiring voter-to-ballot reconciliation and SAVE verification of both registrants and poll workers. The July 7, 2026 letters put every chief election officer in the country on written notice of potential criminal liability for knowingly retaining ineligible registrants. The September 2, 2026 referral letter to the Attorney General adds the front end's private-data layer to the inventory, asking the Justice Department to review whether states' transmission of motor-vehicle records to private list-maintenance and research organizations complies with the Driver's Privacy Protection Act ([Department of Homeland Security](#)).

The Justice Department's demand for the underlying data. Beginning in **May 2025** the Department demanded full, unredacted statewide voter registration lists — including driver's license numbers and partial Social Security numbers — from at least **48 states and the District of Columbia**, and **sued 30 states and the District** for refusing. **At least 16 states provided or agreed to provide** their full lists including those identifiers: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming. The stated purpose was to run the collected data against the Department of Homeland Security's SAVE database ([Brennan Center for Justice tracker](#)). Filing waves are documented against six states in one action, six more in a second citing the NVRA, HAVA, and the Civil Rights Act of 1960 as authority "to demand the production, inspection, and analysis of statewide voter registration lists," and four more on **December 12, 2025** ([Justice Department](#); [GBH](#)). Sixteen states now cross-checked against a federal citizenship database is a real, delivered result and is credited as one.

The border and removal program as a front-end control. An assessment that scores this vector on executive orders and grant conditions alone omits its largest component, which is the enforcement program itself. Every instrument in the preceding paragraphs operates on a registration record after a person is already inside the country; the border program operates on whether the person is inside it. Southwest border encounters fell 79 percent between FY2024 and FY2025, to 443,671, and Border Patrol apprehensions between southwest ports of entry reached 237,538, the lowest level since 1970 ([House Homeland Security Committee](#)). Known gotaways fell more than 90 percent to a daily average of 132 ([House Homeland Security Committee](#)). The cancellation of the CBP One scheduling channel and the termination of the associated parole grants operate on the same margin. Unlike EO 14248, EO 14399, and the DHS grant conditions, none of that required a court's tolerance or a state's



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cooperation, which is why it is the one component of this vector that was neither enjoined nor nullified.

What the record actually establishes about ineligible enrollment. Adjudicated cases exist and are cited in Part I: a federal conviction and two-month prison sentence for voting in nine federal elections ([DOJ, E.D.N.C.](#)), three further federal convictions in the Southern District of Florida ([DOJ, S.D. Fla.](#)), six charged in Michigan on the state's own referrals ([Michigan Attorney General](#)), and a Chinese national who voted in a battleground state and fled to Shanghai rather than stand trial ([DOJ, E.D. Mich.](#)). Equally, the audited volumes are small: Michigan's own audit against 7.2 million active registrations found sixteen apparent noncitizen 2024 voters, and the Census Bureau's own record-linkage study found roughly 0.015 percent of 160 million records linked to noncitizen status ([Census Bureau](#)). Both halves are true simultaneously, and the reconciliation is the finding: the dominant documented cause in the surviving cases is a **government agency enrolling an ineligible person by administrative default**, not an alien defeating a control. That is a defect in the record chain, which is what this vector measures.

The private-intermediary defect, which belongs to this vector rather than to Vector 07.

The referral described in Part I identifies a structural feature of the registration record chain that is verifiable in the governing contract and does not depend on anyone's motives. Member states of the list-maintenance consortium must transmit "all licensing or identification records from motor vehicles departments" at least every sixty days, and in the same clause "[u]nder no circumstances shall the Member transmit an individual's record where the record contains documentation or other information indicating that the individual is a non-citizen of the United States" ([Electronic Registration Information Center, Bylaws and Membership Agreement](#)). The eligible-but-unregistered outreach list generated from that data therefore cannot be screened for citizenship by the entity generating it, because the field that would permit the screen is contractually excluded. Colorado's September 27, 2022 mailer is the demonstrated consequence: roughly **30,000 noncitizens** received registration invitations after a 102,000-name list derived from the consortium's data was matched against a driver's-license file that contained noncitizen licenses without the formatting needed to filter them, and the Secretary of State's office responded with corrective notices and daily Social Security number comparisons ([The Colorado Sun](#)). That is this vector's central finding arriving from a new direction. The failure was a government-supplied data pipeline enrolling ineligible persons by administrative default, the citizenship field was unavailable by design, and the downstream controls caught it — all three facts belong in the record together.



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4.1.1.2 Countervailing Arguments

EO 14248's proof-of-citizenship provision was struck down in three district courts. EO 14399 § 3 was enjoined, though the injunction as to §§ 2 and 3 was stayed by the Supreme Court on August 24, 2026 — the single most favorable judicial development in the record. **Twenty-three of the thirty voter-roll suits have been dismissed**, and the controlling appellate holding is against the Department: on **June 24, 2026** the Sixth Circuit affirmed dismissal in *United States v. Benson*, holding that **"DOJ is not entitled to Michigan's SVRL under the CRA,"** reading § 20701's phrase "come into... possession" to require an outside source and reasoning that an internally generated list never "came into" the Secretary's possession; the panel split 2–1 and the government sought rehearing en banc ([Congressional Research Service LSB11456](#); [CNN](#)). Eleven federal courts had ruled by that point that the Department has no right to obtain states' complete registration lists ([Brennan Center for Justice](#)). The Election Assistance Commission has no quorum at all, so the federal form cannot be amended and Voluntary Voting System Guidelines 2.1 remains an unadopted draft — a procedural obstacle rather than a substantive loss, for reasons set out under Vector 02. DHS has made no criminal referrals against election officials and lacks authority to prosecute them. Twelve states enacted proof of citizenship on their own, which is the durable gain here and is not federal work.

4.1.1.3 Important Considerations

Two features of that adverse record are attributable to the conduct of the custodians rather than to the merits of the demand. First, the *Benson* holding turns on a reading of the Civil Rights Act of 1960 under which a state officer who generates a record internally never "comes into possession" of it and therefore need not produce it — a construction that, if it stands, means the federal retention and inspection statutes cannot reach the central artifact of state election administration at all. The dissent's position, that the records came into the Secretary's possession "when her staff created them and provided them to her," is the reading that would make the statute operative. A statutory inspection right that cannot reach the primary record is a transparency failure of the regime, and the states that litigated for that construction chose non-production over verification. Second, the sixteen states that did comply demonstrate that production was administratively feasible; the refusals were policy choices, not capacity limits. Third, the Election Assistance Commission's inability to amend the federal form is a vacancy problem the executive branch created and the Senate has not cured. The correct reading of the judicial record on this vector is therefore that the demand was legally overbroad **and** that the response to it was, in a majority of states, a refusal to produce records federal law requires be preserved.



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The Michigan enrollment mechanism, and why the measured rate is not the rate. Three findings in this assessment rest on a single body of evidence about how one battleground state enrolls voters, and that evidence belongs in this domain because it is evidence about the roll itself. The audited volumes of noncitizen registration and voting are small, and this report card says so plainly. Michigan's own systemwide audit compared 7.9 million driving records against 7.2 million active registrations and identified sixteen apparent noncitizens who cast a 2024 ballot. The most aggressive federal estimate links roughly 0.015 percent of about 160 million records to noncitizen status, and labels itself a beginning analysis with more than 32 million records unexamined ([Census Bureau](#)). Those figures are the ceiling of what the detection apparatus found. Whether they are also the ceiling of what exists is a separate question, because a count of detections is a measurement of the detector — and here the detector is designed, operated, and audited by the custodian whose enrollment architecture is the thing in question. That is not an insinuation about motive. It is a description of the control structure, and it is verifiable in the statute.

Four features of the design, each documented in primary sources. First, the statute removes the documentary predicate. Michigan's automatic registration provision, as amended effective **June 30, 2025**, closes by instructing that nothing in it shall be construed "to require documentary proof of United States citizenship for voter registration," and directs that where an applicant has **not** provided such documentation the Secretary of State "shall offer to register to vote that individual" so long as the individual indicates citizenship on a motor-vehicle form, then forwards the name to the local clerk "to have the clerk register that individual to vote" ([MCL 168.493a, subsections 6 and 10](#)). Self-attestation is a sufficient predicate for entry into the state's voter file, and the file carries no citizenship field for a clerk to inspect afterwards. Second, the statute removes the consequence: an ineligible person registered "through **human or mechanical error**" is "not considered to have knowingly intended to register to vote" in violation of the criminal provision, and one who then votes "**is presumed to have a defense**" (same section, subsections 8 and 9), with the exclusion reaching only the person who knowingly makes a false statement or intentionally acts. **That exclusion runs opposite to the way this material is usually argued.** The defense does not protect the deliberate fraudster; it protects precisely the person enrolled by administrative default — which is the dominant documented failure mode in every audited jurisdiction examined in this report card. The population most likely to appear in the record is therefore the population least likely to generate a prosecution, and least likely to be counted. The Michigan Attorney General's accounting of **August 13, 2026** shows the mechanism operating: of thirty-eight referrals from the Department of State, six were charged, twenty-two remained under review, and **ten were closed** ([Michigan Attorney General](#)). Those closures are not findings that nothing happened; they are the statute working as written.



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Third, the default direction of the transaction. Michigan's automatic registration is an opt-out regime, and the state's own mailer describes the default without ambiguity: "**You will be registered to vote on [date] unless you mark the option to decline below,**" with the alternative stated as "**Do nothing. You'll be automatically registered 30 days from the date of this notification.**" The same document states the design intent — the program "changes voter registration from 'opt in' to 'opt out'" ([Michigan Department of State](#)). The date the notice process began is material: the Department announced on **May 29, 2026** that starting June 1 residents automatically registered at a branch office would receive an opt-out letter, and gave the reason as compliance with "the updated Michigan election law," tracing the requirement to Public Acts 260, 261, 262 and 268 of 2023 ([Michigan Department of State](#)). On its own terms that release places compliance with a 2023 notice requirement at **June 1, 2026**, five months before the election this report card assesses.

Fourth, the verification duty is assigned to a layer that cannot perform it. Barry County Sheriff **Dar Leaf** has stated that a confidential informant within the Department of State provided evidence that the state's **Customer and Automotive Records System** was generating voter registrations for noncitizens following address changes, and that his office referred the matter to the Justice Department ([Michigan News Source](#)). Under the standing method of this assessment that material is taken as true. In the exhibited exchange a departmental employee writes that the printing is "a **CARS programming error**" and that when the document reaches the county clerk "nothing happens. **As in she is not actually going to be registered to vote because they will see she is not a citizen,**" and adds that under "the new way of registering EVERYONE and requiring them to send back a paper to NOT be registered, we are going to have soooooo many people on the voter file who shouldn't be... **It just creates errors that can be possibly not caught.**" The second exhibit, the letter accompanying a Michigan state identification card, reads: "**Congratulations, you are going to be registered to vote! Your clerk will make sure you're eligible.**" **The circularity is the finding, and it does not depend on anyone's motive.** The state tells the registrant the clerk will verify eligibility; the employee's reason an erroneous registration is harmless is that the clerk "will see she is not a citizen"; but the clerk reaches the Qualified Voter File only after entry, and that file **carries no citizenship designation** ([Michigan News Source](#)). Each layer's assurance rests on a check the other layer is not equipped to perform, and the statute forbids requiring the document that would settle it.

What this does to the federal capacity to measure the problem. If the enrollment architecture forecloses detection at the state level, the only remaining instrument is a federal examination of the rolls, and that instrument has been comprehensively blocked. The Justice



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Department demanded statewide lists from at least forty-seven states and sued more than two dozen, and as of **August 7, 2026** had lost **twenty-one consecutive** cases with no wins, nine matters pending, and sixteen losses under appeal ([Reuters](#)). Michigan's position was stated by the Secretary of State in her own words: "I told them they can't have it" ([Michigan Department of State](#)). The controlling appellate holding followed on **June 24, 2026**, when the Sixth Circuit affirmed dismissal in *United States v. Benson* by a 2–1 vote, construing the Civil Rights Act of 1960 phrase "come into... possession" to require an outside source, with the consequence that a statewide list a state officer generates internally never comes into her possession and need not be produced ([Sixth Circuit opinion](#)). **The resulting proposition is narrower than the usual claim and better supported: the rate is unmeasured rather than measured to be low**, because the two mechanisms capable of measuring it have each been closed — the state mechanism by a statute that forbids the document, immunizes the error, defaults toward enrollment, and assigns verification to a layer without the data, and the federal mechanism by twenty-one consecutive judgments that the records need not be produced. Sixteen states did comply, which establishes that production was administratively feasible and that the refusals were policy choices rather than capacity limits.

The 2020 ballots-to-voters claim, and the retention duty that should have made it checkable. A figure of **499,850** circulates in connection with Michigan and 2020, described as the margin by which the state's official voter records fall short of the certified ballot count. Its purpose here is not to establish that a specific number of ineligible ballots was cast; it is to rebut the proposition that the number is *known* to be small. The Qualified Voter File is "the official file for the conduct of all elections held in this state" ([MCL 168.5090](#)), and among the items it "must contain... for each qualified voter" is "[v]oting history for a 5-year period" ([MCL 168.5090q, subsection 1\(f\)](#)). That is a mandatory content specification, not a discretionary retention schedule, and it means the November 3, 2020 general election was required to remain reconstructable from the official file until **November 3, 2025**. The observation underlying the claim is that three years after the election, well inside that window, the 2020 voting history in the file was still changing ([Lets Fix Stuff](#), an advocacy source); under the standing method that observation is carried as potential rather than dismissed, and it is the part of the claim that matters.

4.1.2 Voter history integrity

4.1.2.1 Actions Taken

Voter history — the record of who actually voted, as distinct from who is registered — is the domain in which the counterfeit-identity-document channel operates, because a fraudulent credential presented



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at a polling place or at a motor-vehicle office produces a false history entry attached to a real or fabricated identity.

The documented channel. Customs and Border Protection seized **19,888 counterfeit United States identity documents** in a single fiscal year, with Chinese and Hong Kong sources the dominant origin, as catalogued in Part I. The one instance in which the channel is documented to have reached an actual ballot is the prosecution of a Chinese national who voted in a battleground state in 2024 and left the country rather than stand trial ([Justice Department, E.D. Mich.](#)); a further charge alleges that a Chinese national voted in the 2024 election by impersonating another Chinese national ([Daily Signal](#)) — a charged case, not an adjudicated finding.

4.1.2.2 Countervailing Arguments

The distinction this assessment preserves. The seizure volumes are documented and large. The *purpose* for which any particular seized document was intended is not documented, and no audit ties the seizure volumes to voter-history entries. Under the potential standard the channel is credited as a real and interdicted pathway to false history, not as a proven program of history falsification. The relevant federal remedy is the SAVE verification requirement in the DHS grant conditions, which reaches registrants and poll workers but not the history record itself, and the voter-to-ballot reconciliation requirement in Condition 5, which does.

4.1.2.3 Important Considerations

The reason this domain cannot be scored more precisely is a data-production failure by government actors, not an absence of federal effort. States like Michigan issued directives to election officials to destroy poll book records and the voter history data contained therein. Such actions make the state government records as the only remaining election records that capture voter history. The reconciliation of history entries against ballots cast is exactly what DHS grant Condition 5 requires and what no state has yet been shown to have performed; and the Department's attempt to obtain the underlying statewide files was defeated on the ground that a state officer's own records need not be produced. The federal government cannot audit a record chain to which it has been denied access.

4.1.3 Ballot integrity

4.1.3.1 Actions Taken

The ballot itself — the physical artifact and its digital image — is the domain in which the single most aggressive federal action of the period occurred, and it is the domain in which the record of what the federal government now holds is clearest.



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The action. The **January 28, 2026** search of Fulton County's Election Hub and Operation Center placed **nearly 700 boxes** of original 2020 ballots and records, together with tabulator tapes for every voting machine used, the ballot images produced during the original count, and the 2020 voter rolls, into federal custody. The court **denied** the county's Rule 41(g) motion for return of the property on **May 6, 2026**, and the materials remain with the Department under analysis by 260 investigative analysts. The stated statutory basis was **52 U.S.C. § 20701** and **52 U.S.C. § 20511(2)(B)** — records retention and fraudulent counting. Full documentation, including the court's criticism of the supporting affidavit and the quashing of the associated grand jury subpoena on **July 7, 2026**, appears in Part I under the Federal Bureau of Investigation ([order](#); [Politico](#)).

Why this is a ballot-integrity action rather than a prosecution. No charge has issued and the limitations period on 2020-election offenses has run. What the action delivered is custodial: the physical ballot record of the most contested county in the most contested state of the 2020 election is, for the first time in five years, in the hands of an entity outside the county that produced it, together with the tabulator tapes and ballot images needed to reconcile it. Whatever that examination concludes, the capability to examine was created by executive action and by nothing else.

4.1.3.2 Countervailing Arguments

Countervailing. The court found the supporting affidavit "far from perfect" and "defective in some respects," specifically as to the presentation of the 511,343-versus-527,925 discrepancy and the ballot-image modification dates, while holding that the affiant had not lied or omitted all contrary facts ([order](#)). Judge Ray, quashing the subpoena, found that even if granted it "would not lead to information that could be used to charge anyone with anything, at least not any viable charge" ([Politico](#)). Both findings are carried at full weight.

4.1.3.3 Important Considerations

Important considerations. Both are also inseparable from the custodial history: the ballots had been under a **court-ordered seal** arising from the county's own pending litigation, the discrepancies the affidavit misread were discrepancies in records the county had never fully explained, and the limitations period expired during five years in which no federal authority examined the records at all. The failure of the criminal theory here is principally a measure of five years of non-production and prior-administration inaction, and only secondarily a measure of the current inquiry's quality.

4.1.4 Vote tally integrity

4.1.4.1 Actions Taken

The tally is the point at which the record chain becomes irreversible, and it is where federal instruments are thinnest. Two DHS grant conditions reach it: **Condition 2** requires a manual audit of



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five percent of ballots cast, with a full hand count of randomly selected precincts covering at least two contests including at least one federal contest, completed before certification; and **Condition 5** requires reconciliation of the number of voters who participated against the number of ballots cast. Condition 2 is the first federal instrument in history to attach money to a hand-count audit floor, and reconciliation is the only condition in the set that tests the tally against the roll rather than testing the roll alone.

Executive action reaching the tabulation technology. EO 14248 directed the Election Assistance Commission to amend the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines to require a voter-verifiable paper record and to bar barcode or QR-code vote counting except for accessibility, and, within 180 days, to review and if appropriate re-certify systems under the new standards, rescinding certifications based on prior standards ([Congressional Research Service IN12590](#)). EO 14399 addresses ballot-envelope identifiers and voting-equipment guidelines ([White House](#)). On **September 4, 2026** the Secretary of Homeland Security asked the Justice Department to investigate whether a widely used voting machine can reliably produce a verifiable record ([New York Times](#)) — the most recent action in the record and, notably, a referral rather than a remedy.

4.1.4.2 Countervailing Arguments

Countervailing. As of the Congressional Research Service's September 18, 2025 update, **no certification had been rescinded**, no system had been certified to a successor guideline, and one system was certified to the 2.0 guidelines with two more in testing ([Congressional Research Service IN12590](#)). The re-certification directive was therefore not executed. The reason is documented and is assessed at length under Vector 02: the body holding the statutory authority to amend the guidelines and to certify or de-certify systems has **had no commissioners at all since July 9, 2026**, and had already failed to perform the security function the directive assumed.

4.1.4.3 Important Considerations

Important considerations. That is not judicial drag and not state drag; it is the accumulated consequence of an agency that did not do the work when it had a quorum, followed by an executive-branch removal that eliminated the quorum needed to compel it. The tally-integrity failure on this record is a failure of federal institutional performance across administrations, and the audit floor in Condition 2 is the only instrument in the inventory that routes around it.

4.1.5 Record destruction and retention

4.1.5.1 Actions Taken

Retention is the domain that makes every other domain auditable, and it is the one on which federal law is clearest and federal enforcement has been weakest. **52 U.S.C. § 20701** requires retention of



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federal election records for twenty-two months, and **52 U.S.C. § 20703** provides for their production. Those are the provisions the Fulton County warrant invoked, and they are the provisions the Sixth Circuit read narrowly in *Benson*.

The action. The government's principal retention-enforcement instruments in this period are the Fulton County warrant, the demands for statewide registration files, and the July 7, 2026 letters, which put every chief election officer in the country on written notice of potential criminal liability. Each treats the preservation and production of the record as the federal interest, independent of any fraud theory. That framing is correct and is the most durable part of the administration's election-integrity posture, because it does not depend on proving what the records show.

4.1.5.2 Countervailing Arguments

The countervailing record. The enforcement outcomes were poor: the grand jury subpoena was quashed as an "arbitrary fishing expedition" with the limitations period run, twenty-three of thirty file suits were dismissed, and the controlling appellate construction of § 20701 now excludes the statewide registration list from the documents a federal officer may demand ([Congressional Research Service LSB11456](#)).

4.1.5.3 Important Considerations

Important considerations. But the substance of what those rulings establish is that the federal retention regime, as currently construed and currently enforced, cannot reach the central records of state election administration — and that it did not reach them for the five years in which the twenty-two-month retention clock and the five-year limitations period on the 2020 election both expired. Georgia's 2020 ballots sat under a state-court seal. Michigan's referral sat in a federal field office for four years and was closed. The Michigan whistleblower testimony, which this assessment treats as true, describes conduct that no federal record-retention enforcement action reached in time. The correct finding is not that the retention theory was weak but that the institutions charged with enforcing it — prior Department leadership, state custodians, and the Election Assistance Commission — did not enforce it, and that the current administration's attempt to do so arrived after the statutory windows had closed.

4.1.6 Ratings

Ratings. E 9 · J 8 · I 4 · S 9 · M 5 · X 6

The effort is the largest of any vector. The state drag is also the largest of any vector, and it is the binding constraint: the front end of the record chain is administered by states that in several cases



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have statutory architectures that affirmatively prevent the verification the federal government is demanding.

4.2 Vector 02 — Electronic voting systems integrity

4.2.1 Actions Taken

DHS grant Condition 1 requires a plan to move away from barcode and QR-code tabulation. Condition 2 requires a manual audit of five percent of ballots cast, with a full hand count of randomly selected precincts covering at least two contests including at least one federal contest, completed before certification. This is the first federal instrument in history to attach money to a hand-count audit floor. EO 14412 addresses cryptographic exposure on a longer horizon. The declassified Venezuela note and the January 15, 2020 vulnerability memorandum put system-manipulation capability into the public record under government seal. The DHS memorandum of August 24, 2026 documents that nine voting-system vendors serve the market, that three of them hold more than eighty percent share, and that all acknowledge China-made components. The September 2, 2026 letter to the Attorney General converts the barcode question from a grant condition into a statutory-compliance referral, asking the Justice Department to determine whether systems that count votes from barcodes and QR codes satisfy Title III of the Help America Vote Act ([Department of Homeland Security](#)).

The Puerto Rico equipment examination, which is the most probative technical action in the record. In May 2025 the Office of the Director of National Intelligence obtained Dominion voting hardware, software, and data copies used in Puerto Rico's 2024 elections, through a voluntary turnover facilitated by the U.S. Attorney, Homeland Security Investigations agents, and an FBI supervisory special agent ([Reuters](#)). The contractor **Mojave Research** found **at least a dozen high- or critical-severity vulnerabilities** and **successfully executed five**, in a set that included reused passwords, easily cracked passwords, passwords embedded in software, disabled firewalls, and active cellular modems creating pathways into software believed isolated — none newly discovered, all with fixes already available ([Nextgov](#)). ODNI's own characterization was that it "found extremely concerning cyber security and operational deployment practices that pose a significant risk to U.S. elections" ([Reuters](#)). For this vector that is the single strongest piece of government-generated evidence in the entire inventory, and it was produced outside the certification system by an intelligence agency with no election-administration mandate.

The three failures attached to it, all of them internal. First, the firm's own finding was that "we did not find evidence that those weaknesses were actively exploited or that votes were altered," a statement whose weight is limited by the self-attesting nature of the audit mechanisms discussed



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below and by the Venezuelan declaration's assertion that the tooling was designed to leave no trace — both analyzed in full in Part I under the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Second, the work was **terminated by stop-work order by October 2025**, before it could be extended to additional systems and vendors ahead of the 2026 midterms ([Politico](#)). Third, and most damaging, the **report has never been released**: the White House delayed it ahead of the midterms ([Reuters](#), via [U.S. News](#)) and it remained unreleased as of **August 12, 2026** ([Politico](#)). Election officials in the jurisdictions running the same equipment therefore do not have the government's findings about it. This is the clearest example in the report of the administration defeating its own strongest instrument, and it is scored against net effectiveness rather than against effort.

Equipment obtained from Fulton County. The **January 28, 2026** seizure brought tabulator tapes for every voting machine used in the 2020 general election in Fulton County, together with the ballot images produced during the original count, into federal custody, and the court **denied** the county's motion for their return on **May 6, 2026** ([order](#)). Combined with the Puerto Rico turnover, the federal government now holds both fielded equipment and the tabulation output of a contested count — the two inputs a genuine end-to-end examination of a barcode-based tabulation chain requires. Neither examination has produced a published finding.

Center for Internet Security accountability. The private entity that operated the federally funded election information-sharing architecture lost that funding in stages, and the sequence is documented: on **February 14, 2025** the Department of Homeland Security "partially terminate[d]" its cooperative agreement with the Center; on **March 3, 2025** the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency notified election officials that it was cutting all funding for the **Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center**, which was completely defunded, and cut **\$10 million** from the multi-state center's activities, against roughly **\$27 million** in federal funding the Center received in FY2024; the cooperative agreement ended **September 30, 2025**, and no-cost nationwide endpoint detection and response ended **October 1, 2025**, with existing members retaining the service through **December 31, 2026** ([Votebeat](#); [The Record](#); [Center for Internet Security](#)). This is accountability in the budgetary sense — the entity no longer receives federal money to perform the function — and it is the most complete de-funding of any organization in the inventory. It is not accountability in the investigative sense: **no audit, inspector-general report, or enforcement action against the Center has been located**, so the record contains no official finding as to how the architecture performed.



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4.2.2 Countervailing Arguments

Condition 1 requires only a plan on the state's own timeline. Information Bulletin 580 preserves ballot-marking devices for accessibility. There is no confirmed CISA director after nineteen months; the agency has contracted from 3,300 to 2,285 staff; and the Critical Product Evaluation program run with Idaho National Laboratory was retired in 2024 — that last item is a genuine loss of adversarial testing capability and is the real internal drag here.

Voting System Test Laboratory accountability, and the absence of it. The laboratories that certify the systems this vector concerns are **Pro V&V** of Huntsville, Alabama, and **SLI Compliance**, a division of Gaming Laboratories International ([Election Assistance Commission](#)). **No federal suspension, revocation, investigation, or congressional referral of either laboratory in 2025 or 2026 has been located.** The reason is structural and is the central accountability finding of this vector: HAVA § 231(b) vests accreditation *and revocation of accreditation* in the Election Assistance Commission, and the Commission's own materials state that accreditation "may not be revoked unless the EAC Commissioners vote to revoke" ([Election Assistance Commission](#)). Because the Commission has had **no commissioners since July 9, 2026**, a revocation vote is not merely unlikely — it is impossible. The only Commission activity located in the period is administrative: the **Voting System Test Laboratory Program Manual Version 3.1**, effective **March 9, 2026** ([Election Assistance Commission](#)), and **Notice of Clarification 26-01**, "End-of-Life Certification Review and Rescission Policy," issued by the Program Director on **January 28, 2026** ([Election Assistance Commission](#)). Neither is an action against a laboratory.

4.2.3 Important Considerations

The Election Assistance Commission had already failed before the board was removed.

The loss of quorum is routinely characterized as the removal of a federal safeguard. The evidentiary record does not support that characterization, and this distinction materially changes the internal-drag score on this vector.

The Help America Vote Act of 2002 assigned the Commission four core duties: maintain the Voluntary Voting System Guidelines, operate the federal testing and certification program including accreditation of Voting System Test Laboratories, administer equipment-replacement funds to the states, and maintain the federal voter registration form ([Election Crime Bureau](#)). On the security-relevant duties, the assessment record shows the following as of the period immediately before the board vacancies:



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Certification and "trusted build" processes did not deliver assurance. Systems bearing federal certification were found in the field containing unlisted software and insecure configurations, and trusted-build procedures themselves destroyed audit records that federal law requires be retained for twenty-two months.

Requirements rigor was absent. Voluntary Voting System Guidelines 2.0 contains no adversary threat model, no enforceable network and access-control baseline, no logging and monitoring baseline, and no configuration-hardening baseline of the kind any other critical-infrastructure sector would treat as mandatory.

Credential management was not governed. Plain-text passwords, plain-text decryption keys, generic shared Election Management System accounts, internet-exposed BIOS passwords, and shared credentials across jurisdictions all persisted under certified configurations.

Supply-chain oversight was declarative only. Certification scope stopped at the vendor's system boundary; no hardware or software bill of materials was required, no screening against Section 889 of the FY2019 NDAA covered-equipment restrictions was performed, and foreign-manufactured platforms carrying out-of-band management engines such as Intel ME and Dell iDRAC were certified without any requirement that those remote, operating-system-invisible control channels be disabled or hardened.

The assurance ecosystem was self-referential. Vendors, former vendor personnel in regulatory roles, the test laboratories, and the Center for Internet Security formed a closed circle that designed, configured, certified, and then "independently" reviewed the same technology. A Dominion configuration in Mesa County, Colorado — with foreign-manufactured hardware, unauthorized software, globally exposed database services, and mass deletion of logs — passed through that ecosystem undetected.

The Commission's own chairman, in a December 7, 2025 email to election-integrity leaders, offered source-code review, laboratory independence, trusted builds, and pre-campaign penetration testing as the security answer. The independent assessment of those assertions concluded that "the factual record available from public sources contradicts the core reassuring implications of the EAC Chair's assertions" and that they "cannot be treated as an adequate or complete description of the true security posture and governance of U.S. voting systems" ([Election Crime Bureau](#)).

On that record the Commission's function had drifted from securing election systems to subsidizing and legitimizing their deployment. The correct analytical treatment is therefore that board removal did



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not subtract a working control, because there was no working control to subtract. Voluntary Voting System Guidelines 2.1 sitting as an unadopted Technical Guidelines Development Committee draft costs the security posture very little, since 2.0's successor inherits the same absent threat model and the same vendor-attestation supply-chain regime. Internal federal drag on this vector is accordingly scored lower than a pure capacity reading would suggest, and the drag that remains is CISA-side and Idaho National Laboratory-side rather than Commission-side.

Baseline reality, and the scale of the barcode exposure. Nationally, 68.4 percent of jurisdictions use hand-marked paper ballots, 26.5 percent use ballot-marking devices for all voters, and 5.1 percent still use direct-recording electronic systems ([Verified Voting](#)). The figure that governs this vector, however, is the county count: **"Currently, 1,954 counties spread across 40 states use voting machines that encode votes in QR or barcodes"** ([Verified Voting](#)). The Census Bureau counts **3,143** counties and county equivalents nationally ([Census Bureau](#)). That is **62.2 percent of all counties in the United States** — an outright majority, in forty of the fifty states.

That proportion is the reason this vector cannot be treated as a residual problem confined to a few holdout jurisdictions. In a barcode or QR-code system the machine-readable encoding is what the tabulator counts; the human-readable text printed alongside it is what the voter can check. The two are produced by the same software and are not independently verified against each other by any step in the process. The voter cannot read the barcode, the poll worker cannot read the barcode, and a hand count of the human-readable text does not audit the barcode — it audits a different field on the same piece of paper. Any divergence between what the voter approved and what the machine counted is therefore invisible at the point of voting, invisible at the point of tabulation, and detectable afterward only by comparing the human-readable text against the reported totals, which is precisely the comparison that most jurisdictions do not perform. When that architecture governs the tabulation of a majority of American counties, it is a first-order national attack surface, not an edge case. Applying the same arithmetic to the audit condition sharpens the point made earlier: the five-percent draw is the only federal instrument that reaches these 1,954 counties at all, and it reaches them only if their states accept the grant and only in randomly chosen precincts.

The government's own agencies now state that architecture in the same terms this assessment does, which is a material change in the evidentiary posture of this vector.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's own report, footer-stamped "As of July 13, 2026" and released inside the July 2026 declassification package, states that ballot-marking devices in 2020 "printed voters' completed ballots on paper but encoded their selections in a barcode that voters had no way to verify," and that "[a] researcher showed that hackers could change the votes encoded in



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the barcode, without even having physical access to the machines" ([White House, Vulnerabilities in Electronic Voting and Ballot Counting Systems](#); [copy of the same CISA report](#), advocacy host). The Secretary of Homeland Security then attached that line to a formal referral and added a departmental finding of his own: "DHS has identified some systems that are configured to disassociate programming of the printed text and the barcode, so the resulting paper record may not be a reliable record for a manual audit" ([Department of Homeland Security](#)). The statutory hook is **52 U.S.C. § 21081(a)(2)(B)(i)**, which requires that a voting system "produce a permanent paper record with a manual audit capacity for such system" ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)).

Three qualifications keep that from being scored as more than it is. The CISA report describes agency work "[f]rom around 2019 to 2024" conducted "upon the request of system owners and operators" with notification to the owner in every case — it is a disclosed-vulnerability record, not evidence of an exploited election. The disassociation finding is unaccompanied by any published system, vendor, jurisdiction, count, or method, which places it in the same category as the SAVE match assertions: a departmental claim rather than an auditable dataset. And **no court or Commission has ever held that barcode tabulation fails § 21081(a)(2)(B)** — the long-running challenge to Georgia's system was dismissed in April 2025 ([Georgia Recorder](#)), and the Attorney General's HAVA enforcement authority at **52 U.S.C. § 21111** permits a civil action only "against any State or jurisdiction" ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)), which means the remedy for a defective architecture runs against the jurisdictions using it rather than against the vendors who built it. Both referrals are assessed in full in Part I.

State-level movement is where the actual displacement is happening. Texas bans paperless direct-recording electronic systems effective September 1, 2026 — a state action. Georgia's SB 3EX delayed its QR-code ban to 2028 and Georgia has moved away from the federal barcode preference. Louisiana's replacement rollout begins spring 2027.

The technical case against the systems themselves. The DHS transition condition and the audit condition are best understood against a documented record of failure modes in the deployed equipment, because that record determines whether the federal instruments are proportionate. Five findings bear directly on the ratings assigned here.

First, **the registration system and the ballot-production system are not isolated from each other.** Michigan's own voting-system contract, 071B7700117, carries requirement 1.2.B.11 mandating a data flow from the Qualified Voter File to the Election Management System, answered "Y." Vendor marketing for mobile ballot printing takes the voter registration system as a direct input,



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advertising "BALLOTS WHEN & WHERE YOU WANT THEM!" A registration database that can generate ballots collapses the separation between deciding who may vote and producing what they vote on. Michigan's 2024 general election data compounds the concern: a published extract contained 208,075 rows against 82,647 unique voter identifiers — **125,428 excess records** — which the state attributed to a formatting defect without publishing either the query or a reconciliation.

Second, **the certified perimeter does not cover the whole system.** Ballot-on-demand printing sits outside the scope of federal certification entirely. CVE-2022-1747 records that voter session activation on a widely deployed ballot-marking device is "susceptible to forgery." CISA advisory ICSA-22-154-01 documented nine vulnerabilities in that device family, including the capacity to "print an arbitrary number of ballots without authorization."

Third, **the audit mechanisms are self-attesting.** CVE-2022-1740 records that hash display, audit log, and export functions "rely on self-attestation mechanisms" — the system reports on its own integrity using the very components whose integrity is in question. CVE-2022-1743 records that a compromise at the Election Management System propagates to every ballot-marking device it provisions. Princeton's Center for Information Technology Policy demonstrated malicious code installed in under a minute that modifies "all records, logs, and counters." A log that the attacker can rewrite is not evidence.

Fourth, **patching is decoupled from deployment by the certification process itself.** The nine-vulnerability patch issued in June 2022 was not certified until March 16, 2023, and Georgia declined to install it until after the 2024 election. Maricopa County's position is that applying a patch without federal approval means "the County's tabulation equipment would lose its federal and state certification." That is a regime in which a jurisdiction must choose between running known-vulnerable software and forfeiting its certification — and the observed choice is to run the vulnerable software. In *Curling v. Raffensperger* the court found in its November 10, 2023 order that software copying "materially increased the risk... because all 159 Georgia counties used the same voting system," which is the homogeneity problem stated by a federal court.

Fifth, and most consequential for Vector 03 as well as this one, **the results-reporting layer is governed by no federal standard at all.** The Election Assistance Commission's own position on election-night reporting is that "There are no federal standards governing the design, security, and setup of this critical aspect of the electoral process." Vendor documentation describes "Publishing the unofficial Election Results for further processing or reporting (i.e. by news and media feeds)" as a routine system function. The consequences are observable in the archived national feed from 2020:



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within a roughly four-hour window on November 4, 2020, **fifty of fifty-one presidential contests had their cumulative totals discarded and reset to zero, discarding 134,998,591 recorded votes**, with no public log explaining the operation; excluding those resets, the same archive records **416 further downward revisions across 45 contests, 330 of them after counting was essentially complete**. In Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Wisconsin the volume of unexplained downward revision equals or exceeds the certified statewide margin. A cumulative total is by construction monotonic — it can only rise — so every one of those decrements is either a correction that was never disclosed or an error that was never explained, and no federal rule requires anyone to say which. Fulton County's 2020 audit produced 3,075 duplicate ballot images that investigators were "unable to determine how many... were included in the results used to certify."

The failure mode is not hypothetical and did not stop in 2020. On **August 11, 2026** Blue Earth County, Minnesota uploaded approximately 17,000 test-deck records to the live Secretary of State results site, where they remained until roughly 10:40 p.m.; the error was caught only because "results were higher than voter turnout." Minnesota permits manual data entry into the state results system, where Colorado Rule 11.9.1 requires that results be exported "from the voting system," and Minn. Stat. § 206.89 provides no post-election review of a primary at all. A test deck reaching a live public results feed, discovered by arithmetic rather than by any control, in a state with no primary review mechanism, is a demonstration of the entire chain of custody failing at once.

The consequence, stated plainly. The administration's substantive case on this vector is that the certification chain does not deliver assurance. The Puerto Rico examination substantiated that case with executed exploits against a certified, fielded system. The one remedy that federal law provides for a laboratory that certified such a system — revocation of accreditation — was placed permanently out of reach in the same period, by the executive branch's own removal of the commissioners who alone could vote it. Day-to-day testing and certification continue without commissioner action ([Votebeat](#)), which means the certification pipeline is still running while the only mechanism for holding it accountable is disabled. That outcome is internal drag of the administration's own making, and it is scored as such.

The countervailing record on this vector is almost entirely the product of institutions this assessment scores elsewhere, and the attribution has to be stated. The dismissal of the long-running Georgia challenge to the state's ballot-marking devices, and the appellate affirmance behind it, are rulings by the same federal courts whose posture Vector 04 measures; they resolved standing and remedy, not whether a barcode a voter cannot read is a verifiable record. The assurance that the equipment is secure comes in substantial part from the agency that certified the 2020 election as the most secure in



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American history while restricting from disclosure its own assessment of exploited-class vulnerabilities, which is the Vector 09 finding. The testing regime's defense of its own adequacy comes from accredited private laboratories, which is the Vector 07 mechanism, and the body empowered to withdraw an accreditation has no seated commissioners. The vendors' assurances on component origin and development locus are the vendors' own, and Vector 10 records that all nine have acknowledged China-made components. None of that converts an adverse ruling into a favourable one. It does mean that on this vector the reassurance and the resistance both originate inside the structures the assessment is measuring, and no independent adjudication of the underlying technical question exists in the record.

4.2.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 8 · J 5 · I 5 · S 6 · M 9 · X 4

The five-percent audit condition is the most substantively valuable single measure in the entire inventory, because it is a detection control rather than a prevention control and it operates after the fact on evidence that already exists. Its weaknesses are that it is tied to voluntary grant acceptance, that it draws precincts at random rather than by pivotal weight, that it audits the human-readable record while 1,954 counties tabulate the barcode, and that it arrives fewer than seventy days before the election. The score is unchanged not because the condition is weak but because its reach is contingent at every step.

4.3 Vector 03 — Election results certification integrity

4.3.1 Actions Taken

Roughly one thousand Justice Department monitors are planned for November 3. The five-percent pre-certification audit condition, if adopted, inserts a verification step before certification. The July 7, 2026 letters carry aiding-and-abetting language that reaches certification conduct. Proclamation 10989 pardoned the 2020 alternate electors, which removes the deterrent overhang from that conduct.

4.3.2 Countervailing Arguments

There is no federal instrument addressing certification duress, mathematical impossibility, or false statements to Congress. Certification is a matter of state law in every state. The monitor deployment is an observation instrument, not an enforcement one, and its jurisdiction selection has drawn a bipartisan objection that nearly all covered states have Democratic chief election officials.



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4.3.3 Important Considerations

The low effort score on this vector should not be read as indifference, and the low net effectiveness should not be read as a judgment on the merits of the concern. Certification is the point in the process at which federal authority is at its constitutional minimum and state and local discretion at its maximum, so the absence of federal instruments here reflects the allocation of power rather than the allocation of attention. The countervailing record is correspondingly thin on both sides: there is little federal action to strike down, and the resistance that exists is structural rather than litigated. What does belong in the tempering is that the results-reporting layer — the precinct capture, accumulation, and unofficial transmission sequence on which every certification narrative is built — is governed by no federal standard at all, a gap identified under Vector 02 and unaddressed by any instrument in this inventory. An assessment that scored this vector only on instruments issued would report a quiet vector. Scored on exposure, it is the vector with the largest unaddressed gap relative to the smallest available federal lever.

4.3.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 4 · J 4 · I 6 · S 5 · M 6 · X 2

This is the vector where executive action has the least available purchase, and the inventory reflects that.

4.4 Vector 04 — Judicial malfeasance

4.4.1 Actions Taken

No executive instrument can reach this vector directly; the Constitution does not permit it. What the administration has done is litigate persistently and build a public record of adverse rulings, and appoint and confirm judges. The law-firm orders, including EO 14263 against Susman Godfrey, were an attempt to reach the litigation bar; all four were permanently enjoined.

Messaging on judicial rulings, and the appellate strategy. Because no executive instrument can reach judicial conduct, the administration's operative instruments on this vector are public characterization of adverse rulings and the deliberate placement of contested questions before the Supreme Court. Both are treated here as executive action under this report card's stated method.

Public characterization. The President and his senior officials have responded to adverse district-court rulings on election and immigration instruments with sustained public criticism of the judges and courts involved, rather than with silent compliance. In the election-record context the most



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consequential instance is the reaction to the Fulton County rulings, where the Department's own statement after the July 7, 2026 order was that the ruling "jeopardizes both the historic purview of the grand jury and a long-delayed assessment of 2020 election processes" ([Politico](#)). The measurable effect of such messaging is on the political salience of judicial election-administration rulings, not on the rulings themselves, and this assessment credits it as deterrence and agenda-setting rather than as legal effect.

Getting the precedents on the record. The more consequential strategy is appellate. Three outcomes in the period show it working: the Supreme Court's stay of the injunction against EO 14399 §§ 2 and 3 on **August 24, 2026**, which is the single most favorable legal development in the entire record and indicates that the appellate ceiling substantially exceeds the district-court floor; ***Louisiana v. Callais***, decided 6–3 on **April 29, 2026**, which rewrote Voting Rights Act districting doctrine; and ***Trump v. Slaughter***, decided in **June 2026**, which the White House cited as the authority for removing the Election Assistance Commissioners ([Congressional Research Service IN12713](#)). The pattern is consistent: instruments are issued in a form certain to be enjoined, the adverse district ruling is absorbed, and the question is carried up. On a two-to-four-year horizon that is the most effective available response to district-court drag. On the horizon this report card measures — November 3, 2026 — it delivers almost nothing, because the instrument is enjoined during the cycle in which it was needed.

4.4.2 Countervailing Arguments

This vector is where the administration's program has been most comprehensively defeated. EO 14248 struck down in three courts. EO 14399 § 3 enjoined. Twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses. The Postal Service rule's entire operational core stayed nationwide. Four law-firm orders permanently enjoined. Judge David Carter's finding that centralizing voter data federally "would have a chilling effect on voter registration." The one favorable development is the Supreme Court's August 24, 2026 stay in the EO 14399 litigation, which suggests the appellate ceiling is higher than the district-court floor.

4.4.3 Important Considerations

The countervailing case is that the administration's litigation losses are a measure of the instruments' legal quality rather than of judicial hostility, and this assessment carries that reading. But the record also documents specific judicial conduct that the losses obscure: a grand jury subpoena quashed with the observation that the limitations period had run on offenses no prior administration had investigated, an appellate construction of § 20701 under which a state officer's internally generated



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records can never be federally inspected, and a five-year seal on the Fulton County ballots imposed in state litigation. Those outcomes were produced by courts, but each one was made possible by a government actor's prior non-production or inaction. A judiciary that declines to order production of records the executive should have sought five years earlier is enforcing a limitation the executive branch created.

4.4.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 3 · J 9 · I 2 · S 1 · M 8 · X 1

Effort is low because the Constitution forecloses direct reach, leaving four thin instruments. J 9 is the highest score in the matrix and definitionally so — on this vector judicial output is the object of measurement, not an obstacle to it. I 2 and S 1 sit near the floor because an Article III judge, not a federal employee or a state official, mediates the outcome. X 1 is the lowest in the assessment and follows from the horizon: the appellate route pays out on a two-to-four-year clock while the instruments stood enjoined through the cycle they were needed.

4.5 Vector 05 — Information control

4.5.1 Actions Taken

This is the administration's most successful vector by a wide margin, and the mechanism is disclosure rather than regulation. The 562-page declassification program inverted the information-control dynamic: material that was classified is now public and citable, including agency case files, internal email chains, and prosecutorial declination records. EO 14152 revoked the clearances of the fifty-one signers; ODNI revoked thirty-seven clearances tied to the 2017 assessment. The Round River deck, the Oxford Comma opening communication, the MARCH TOLL file, and the Clapper email chain are now primary sources rather than allegations. The White House election-integrity page functions as a standing publication instrument.

Dismantling the apparatus, not just disclosing it. Disclosure is the larger half of this vector, but it is not the whole of it. Four structural actions removed the machinery itself, and they are set out in full in Part I.

The **Global Engagement Center** is closed, its successor office is closed, its frameworks are formally ceased, and a consent decree entered April 8, 2026 in the Eastern District of Texas binds the State Department until **January 31, 2036** against suppressing, censoring, demonetizing, or downgrading protected American speech, against asking third parties to do so, and against funding fact-checking, credibility-rating, counter-disinformation, or media-literacy tools for that purpose, with plaintiffs



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serving as compliance monitors for a decade ([consent decree](#)). That is the single most durable instrument in the entire inventory, because it survives a change of administration and does not depend on any state's cooperation. The Center's own documented participation in the Election Integrity Partnership — the December 4, 2020 analyst message thanking the Partnership's principals "for allowing me to participate in the Election Integrity Partnership with the GEC," and the October 14, 2020 introduction routed through CISA — is what makes its closure an election action rather than a foreign-policy one.

The **Agency for International Development** is dismantled, taking with it the doctrinal architecture set out in its own 2021 primer — "there is also a right not to be disinformed," advertiser outreach to "disrupt the funding and financial incentive to disinform," and the recommendation that national governments "Regulate ad networks" and "Enforce minimum levels of public service news on to the platforms" — together with the grant pipeline that carried it. The August 29, 2025 rescission of \$322 million from the Democracy Fund was executed on the stated ground that the programs "conducted censorship operations and meddled in elections in foreign countries."

The Election Integrity Partnership itself no longer operates. The Partnership ran in the 2020 and 2022 cycles; the Stanford Internet Observatory program that anchored it ended in 2024, its founding director departed in November 2023, and its research manager's contract was not renewed in June 2024 ([Stanford Internet Observatory](#)). The dismantlement was not accomplished by a single instrument but by convergent pressure: congressional subpoenas, litigation costs, funder withdrawal, and the departure of the individuals who ran it. Whether that convergence is described as accountability or as pressure depends on one's priors, and this assessment records the mechanism rather than adjudicating the label. Regulatory and litigation pressure on the platform and media layer followed the same pattern and produced measurable results — an FTC civil investigative demand against a media-monitoring organization issued May 20, 2025 was **preliminarily enjoined August 15, 2025** on a finding that retaliatory animus was the but-for cause, withdrawn April 20, 2026, and the matter closed May 4, 2026 ([Clearinghouse](#)); the FCC chairman stated on September 17, 2025 that a broadcaster's remarks could expose it to investigation under "rarely used news distortion rules," and "Within hours" the program was off the air after two station groups declined to carry it ([Politico](#)); and defamation actions brought by the President produced settlements of **\$15 million** plus \$1 million in fees from one network in December 2024 and **\$16 million** from another on July 2, 2025. These are real constraints on the 2020-era information-control coalition. They are also, on their face, government action bearing on editorial decisions, and one of them was enjoined as retaliatory by a



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federal court. Recording only the first half would make this assessment less useful, not more persuasive.

Public broadcasting. EO 14290 of May 1, 2025 directed the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to cease funding NPR and PBS, finding that "neither entity presents a fair, accurate, or unbiased portrayal of current events to taxpaying citizens" ([whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov)). The order was held unconstitutional and permanently enjoined, but the fiscal instrument succeeded where the legal one failed: Congress rescinded \$1.1 billion and the Corporation dissolved itself on January 5, 2026 ([NPR](https://www.npr.org)). The bias premise connects to this vector at a specific point: the Global Disinformation Index, itself a Global Engagement Center subawardee at \$100,000 and an organization whose own funding application described a goal of disrupting, defunding, and down-ranking disinformation sites, rated NPR among the outlets least likely to spread disinformation. A federally subsidized rating apparatus certifying the credibility of a federally subsidized broadcaster is a closed loop, and defunding one side opens it. The direct federal share of NPR's budget was about one percent, and the network absorbed the loss with roughly a four-percent reduction in its content division against a \$15 million drop in member-station fees ([NPR](https://www.npr.org)) — so the fiscal effect on the broadcaster is modest and the significant effect is the severing of the subsidy loop and the elimination of the public-broadcasting distribution subsidy at the station level.

Removal of access to classified information, individual and organizational. The information-control apparatus of 2020 was operated by identifiable people and firms holding federal clearances, and five instruments in this period removed or suspended that access. The **January 20, 2025** memorandum, published at **90 FR 8233**, revoked the clearances of **John Brennan, James Clapper, Peter Strzok, Lisa Page, Andrew McCabe, Michael Hayden, Susan Rice, Alexander Vindman, Fiona Hill, and Mark Zaid**, and directed revocation as to the approximately **51 signers of the 2020 laptop letter** and **John Bolton**, on the finding that they "willfully weaponized the gravitas of the Intelligence Community to manipulate the political process" ([Federal Register](https://www.federalregister.gov)). The **March 2025** memorandum reached **Antony Blinken, Jacob Sullivan, Lisa Monaco, Norman Eisen, Letitia James, Alvin Bragg, Andrew Weissmann, Hillary Clinton, Elizabeth Cheney, Kamala Harris, Adam Kinzinger** and the former President's family ([White House](https://www.whitehouse.gov)). The **April 9, 2025** memorandum revoked the clearance of former CISA Director **Chris Krebs** and suspended clearances at associated entities **including SentinelOne**, expressly on grounds of censorship and of having "falsely and baselessly den[ied] that the 2020 election was rigged and stolen," and ordered a six-year review of the agency's activities ([White House](https://www.whitehouse.gov)). The **February 25, 2025** memorandum suspended clearances at **Covington & Burling LLP** ([govinfo](https://www.govinfo.gov)), and an ODNI memorandum of **August 19, 2025** revoked the clearances of **37** current and



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former national security officials, many of whom had worked on foreign election-threat analysis ([Associated Press](#)).

Why these belong in this vector at full weight. Every other instrument in this vector removed an institution, a budget line, or a partnership. These removed the individual capacity of the specific officials and firms who designed, executed, and publicly defended the 2020 information-control posture — including the official who ran the federal agency at its center. They required no court's permission, no state's cooperation, and no appropriation, and with one narrow exception they have held. That combination of reach and durability is why net effectiveness on this vector stands where it does.

Campaign-finance and media instruments, and the enforcement vacuum. Two further components of this vector operate on the money and media side, and both are currently unenforceable for the same reason.

Federal Election Commission threats and actions. The Commission has had **no policymaking quorum since May 1, 2025**, holding two of six seats with four vacant, and cannot open or resolve any enforcement matter without four affirmative votes ([Congressional Research Service R45160](#); [Federal Election Commission notice](#)). **Executive Order 14215 of February 18, 2025** asserted at **section 7** that "the President and the Attorney General's opinions on questions of law are controlling on all employees" of the executive branch including independent agencies, and the Democratic party committees sued on **February 28, 2025** challenging it as applied to the Commission ([Federal Register public inspection copy](#); [Federal Election Commission](#)). In 2024 the campaign filed Commission complaints against the Washington Post and took legal action concerning CBS over coverage of the opposing candidate ([CNBC](#)). The Commission's governing precedent remains its **rejection** of a complaint alleging that a "60 Minutes" story constituted an illegal corporate contribution ([Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press](#)), and **no 2025-2026 decision treating corporate press coverage as an in-kind contribution has been located**. The net position is that the threat of Commission action against media organizations is real as messaging and empty as enforcement, and the same paralysis that forecloses it also forecloses any conduit-contribution action on the other side of the ledger.

Presidential messaging on the press, and the practice of public, attributable action. The administration's media posture is documented in Part I under President Trump and is credited here in one respect specific to this vector. The instrument the 2020 information-control apparatus depended on was unattributed influence — private organizations flagging content, federal offices routing it, and



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no signature on anything. Against that, a communication practice built on **271 signed and published executive orders** across 2025–2026, against 162 for the preceding administration ([Office of the Federal Register](#)), and **at least 493 press interactions in the first year**, including 327 short question-and-answer sessions and 13 formal press conferences, against 266 interactions in the preceding administration's first year ([New York Post, reporting Kumar's data](#)), is a structurally different posture: every instrument has an author and a date, and the author answers questions about it on the record. The contrast the administration draws is with autopen usage by its predecessor, formalized in the Presidential Memorandum "Reviewing Certain Presidential Actions" of **June 4, 2025** and in the House Oversight report of **October 28, 2025**, which rested on 14 depositions totaling nearly 47 hours and referred the matter to the Attorney General ([White House](#); [House Oversight](#)).

The Federal Communications Commission instrument. The Commission's record in this period is inventoried in Part I and is not re-argued here. Two elements belong in this vector at the level of intention rather than instrument: the President's referral of a network host to the Commission "for rebuke or punishment" on **August 30, 2026** ([Los Angeles Times](#)), and the Chairman's statement of **September 6, 2026** that the Commission "may put guidance out soon to remind broadcasters about their obligations with respect to not airing fake polls, particularly if they're done to suppress people heading into the fall" ([Fox News](#)). The second is the only statement by a federal officer in this record that identifies published polling as a turnout-suppression mechanism, which is the mechanism assessed under media drag in Part III. Neither is scored as an executed instrument, because no Commission document on the subject has been published and the Chairman's word was "may."

4.5.2 Countervailing Arguments

The *Murthy* consent decree of March 24, 2026 binds CISA for ten years and is a real structural gain, but it constrains a future administration as much as it protects speech now. Three further items cut against the strongest form of the claim and are carried rather than omitted. The Fifth Circuit removed the State Department from the *Missouri v. Biden* injunction on October 3, 2023, finding no evidence its communications went beyond educating platforms on foreign-actor tools and techniques. *Murthy* was decided on standing and no court has ever reached the merits of federal jawboning in the 2020 cycle. And the Global Engagement Center's own inspector-general record documents under-performance and "serious internal dysfunction" rather than domestic operational reach, while independent analysis of the released files argues they do not show a censorship operation, noting that no action was taken on 65 percent of Partnership tickets and that the Center was tagged on 2.5 percent of them ([Lawfare](#)). The strongest defensible claim is that a federal foreign-facing information agency was documented inside a domestic election-speech triage system during a federal election, which is



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improper regardless of ticket volume — not that a proven mass-suppression operation has been established. Relatedly, the figure 475,581 is a narrative-virality metric and not a count of suppressed posts, and is not used as one here. The statutory reporting gap under 50 U.S.C. §§ 3371 and 3371a cuts directly against the transparency claim: the administration has published extensively about 2016 and 2020 while the vulnerability assessment statutorily required 180 days before the 2026 election is outstanding. The Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act extension expires September 30, 2026. And the gap between document text and official characterization on the China records — 204,822,241 records described as likely compromised versus 220 million illicitly acquired, fifteen named states versus eighteen asserted — gives critics a durable line of attack. CIA's own tradecraft review found the 2016 assessment "robust and consistent with ICD 203," faulting only one confidence level, which cuts against the treasonous-conspiracy framing.

Countervailing. Mark Zaid obtained a **preliminary injunction** in the District of Columbia barring enforcement of the March memorandum against him ([PBS NewsHour](#)). Two of the five instruments operate at organization level, reaching people by employer rather than by adjudicated conduct, and none rests on a tribunal's finding — the same procedural objection this report card makes to private threat-designation channels, now running in the other direction. That objection is real and is not waived.

4.5.3 Important Considerations

The CISA contradiction. The central information-control finding of the 2020 record is now documentary rather than inferential, and it belongs in this vector as an established fact rather than a contested claim.

On November 12, 2020, the Election Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council and Sector Coordinating Council, convened and co-chaired by CISA, issued a joint statement declaring that "the November 3rd election was the most secure in American history" and that "there is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised" ([CISA](#)). That statement became the load-bearing public assertion on which every subsequent dismissal of election-security concerns rested.

At the time it was made, CISA held its own assessment saying something materially different. The **Election Infrastructure Subsector Cyber Risk Summary**, published by CISA in March 2021 and marked TLP:AMBER — "limited disclosure, restricted to participants' organizations" — covers the election year running November 3, 2019 to November 3, 2020 across 324 participating election-infrastructure entities. Its findings include the following.



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Finding	Value
Entities with a critical or high severity vulnerability on an internet-accessible host	48 percent
Entities with spearphishing weaknesses in assessment	76 percent
Entities running unsupported operating systems on internet-accessible hosts	34 percent
Entities running at least one risky service on an internet-accessible host	39 percent
Total vulnerabilities detected	48,796, of which 319 critical and 1,820 high
Median days to remediate critical vulnerabilities	103.7, against CISA's own 15-day standard
Median days to remediate high vulnerabilities	91.9, against CISA's own 30-day standard
Critical and high vulnerabilities left unremediated beyond 90 days	125 critical, 480 high
Penetration-test and vulnerability-assessment findings across 108 entities	451 findings, 9 percent critical, 42 percent high
Phishing click rate for election entities	17.4 percent, against 9.6 percent for all other state, local, tribal, territorial and critical-infrastructure entities

The decisive figure is the one CISA titled "**Vulnerabilities with Known Exploits.**" Through the four quarters of the election year, the share of election-infrastructure entities carrying a vulnerability for which a working public exploit existed ran 6.8, 6.2, 6.2, and 4.9 percent at critical severity; 9.3, 8.3, 7.7, and 8.0 percent at high severity; and 45.1, 25.0, 25.0, and 38.0 percent at medium severity. Critical-severity vulnerabilities with known exploits took a median of 108 days to close. On election day, in other words, roughly one in twenty assessed election-infrastructure entities was carrying a critical vulnerability with a publicly available exploit, and had been doing so for months.

CISA's own introduction to that document goes further than the vulnerability tables. It states that "in the run-up to the 2020 election, an APT actor successfully obtained U.S. voter registration data, including in at least one instance from a state election website, and launched an election-related disinformation campaign," and that "in October 2020, CISA also observed APTs targeting elections infrastructure in state, local, tribal, and territorial government entities' networks." It documents advanced persistent threat actors chaining vulnerabilities against election organizations, citing its own



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alerts on Iranian acquisition of voter registration data ([CISA AA20-304A](#)) and on vulnerability chaining against elections organizations ([CISA AA20-283A](#)). Its only hedge is temporal and carefully bounded: "as of October 24, 2020, CISA had no evidence to indicate that integrity of elections data was compromised."

The contradiction is therefore not between CISA and its critics. It is between CISA's public statement and CISA's own contemporaneous internal assessment. Publicly: most secure in American history, no evidence of compromise. Internally, and restricted from public disclosure: exploited-class vulnerabilities present on election infrastructure throughout the election year, remediation running seven times the agency's own deadline, successful nation-state acquisition of voter registration data from a state election website, and observed targeting of election networks in the final weeks. The agency did not lack the information. It classified the information and issued the opposite conclusion.

This is what makes the declassification program a Vector 05 accomplishment rather than a public-relations exercise. The 2020 information-control problem was not principally private-platform moderation; it was a federal agency using its authority over classification to suppress the evidentiary basis for a dissenting conclusion, and then using its credibility as the sector risk management agency to foreclose the question. It is also the reason the same contradiction scores against the government under Vector 09: an agency that withholds an adverse assessment while publicly certifying the opposite has weaponized information asymmetry, and the *Murthy* consent decree of March 24, 2026 addresses only the downstream speech-suppression half of that mechanism.

Important considerations. It is tempered by one fact the record establishes: the conduct at issue was never going to be adjudicated, because the institutions with jurisdiction over it declined to examine it. No inspector general, no grand jury, and no congressional committee with subpoena power produced a finding on the 2020 information-control apparatus in the four years after it operated, and the government's own contemporaneous assessments of election-infrastructure vulnerability remained classified until this administration released them. Where the adjudicative route has been closed by institutional non-performance, action by the only instrument that remains available is the predictable result, and its procedural weakness is part of the cost of that non-performance.

4.5.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 9 · J 3 · I 4 · S 1 · M 5 · X 9

The only vector where effort and net effectiveness converge at the top, because disclosure and dismantlement need no court's permission, no state's cooperation, and no appropriation. The M 5 explanation is the analytically interesting one: when the action is publication, unfavorable coverage



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suppresses salience but not availability — the primary sources are in the record either way. X stops at 9 because two obligations remain open.

4.6 Vector 06 — Financial influence

4.6.1 Actions Taken

EO 14148 § 2(aa) revoked EO 14019, which had directed every federal agency into voter-registration activity — the single cleanest, most durable, and least reversible action in the entire inventory, and one that required no litigation to take effect. The grantee-lobbying memorandum restricts federal grantees from subsidizing lobbying. The Rescissions Act of 2025 cancelled \$8.973 billion, and the pocket-rescission order permitted roughly \$4 billion more to lapse. EO 14406 and EO 14331 address financial-system integrity and debanking. EO 14157 designated cartels as foreign terrorist organizations, which reaches the funding pathways alleged in the 2020 report. EO 14395 established the Task Force to Eliminate Fraud. The congressional and state scrutiny of ActBlue, whatever its legal outcome, has imposed more than \$17 million in legal consulting cost, driven cycle operating expenses above \$93 million against roughly \$67 million for the whole 2022 cycle, and eliminated the entire legal and compliance leadership layer.

Cartel finance is the component this vector was previously scored without. EO 14157 produced designations of eight organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists on February 20, 2025, including Tren de Aragua and MS-13 ([90 FR 10030](#)). FinCEN issued the first orders ever made under 31 U.S.C. § 2313a against three Mexican financial institutions on June 25, 2025 ([FinCEN](#)), and imposed southwest border Geographic Targeting Orders with a currency-transaction reporting threshold as low as **\$200** ([FinCEN FAQs](#)). The measurable result is FinCEN's own: 67,540 Bank Secrecy Act reports involving nearly \$5 billion in suspected human-smuggling-linked activity across 2023 through 2025, with such reports **down 62 percent in 2025** ([FinCEN](#)). Separately, the termination of the Shelter and Services Program on April 1, 2025 removed a **\$640.9 million** annual federal funding channel to the migrant-services nongovernmental sector, including \$50.4 million to Catholic Charities entities and \$186 million clawed back from New York City ([FEMA](#)).

Reforms at ActBlue spurred by exposure. The most concrete measurable effect of the financial-influence effort on this vector is not a prosecution but a set of control changes at the largest small-dollar conduit on one side of American politics. The platform now **enforces card verification value entry on every contribution, prohibits gift cards, blocks non-reloadable prepaid cards, blocks contributions carrying a foreign mailing address, a foreign originating**



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internet protocol address, or a foreign card bank identification number, requires the contributor name to match the name on the instrument, and has stopped accepting contributions from United States citizens residing abroad altogether; it also certifies to Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard Level 1 ([ActBlue](#)). Each of those controls closes one of the specific mechanisms the **Presidential Memorandum of April 24, 2025** identified when it directed an investigation under **52 U.S.C. §§ 30121 and 30122** into straw and foreign-national contributions routed through online platforms ([White House](#)).

Organizational consequences. Alongside the control changes the organization has absorbed substantial operational damage: **at least seven senior officials resigned in February 2025**, the head of its customer-service operation resigned and its senior counsel went on leave, and the entity has reported **more than \$17 million in legal and consulting expenditure** responding to congressional and executive scrutiny. Its chief executive **invoked the Fifth Amendment before the House Committee on Oversight on June 10, 2026** ([CNN](#)). The House Committee on House Administration and the Committee on the Judiciary have maintained subpoena pressure, issuing a further report, **"Fraud on ActBlue, Part II," on April 20, 2026** ([House Judiciary](#)).

4.6.2 Countervailing Arguments

ActBlue's throughput is undiminished at \$1.78 billion in FY2025 and \$1.154 billion in the first half of 2026. No charge exists against the entity or any officer. The Texas suit is enjoined. The major grantmakers hold no federal awards, so defunding cannot reach them. The Federal Election Commission has had no quorum since May 1, 2025, which means the principal federal enforcement body for campaign finance is non-functional through the 2026 cycle — an internal drag the administration has not remedied.

Countervailing. The causal claim requires two qualifications. First, several of the controls now presented as reforms **predate the 2025 memorandum**: the platform's own submissions to the December 2024 congressional inquiry record that foreign prepaid and gift-card instruments were being rejected as of September 2024, and the Texas Attorney General's office confirmed cooperation on card-verification enforcement in **August 2024**. Second, **no charge has been brought against the entity or any officer of it**, the 180-day report the memorandum directed has **never been made public**, and the platform reported **\$586 million raised in the second quarter of 2026** — a volume inconsistent with functional disruption ([CNN](#)).



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4.6.3 Important Considerations

The absence of a public report is itself the government-actor failure rather than a finding of no violation. A directed 180-day report that was neither released nor summarized, in a matter where the responsible commission has **no quorum to act on referrals** and the platform's chief executive declined to answer on Fifth Amendment grounds, leaves the record in a state where neither exoneration nor liability can be established from public documents. The reform set is real and verifiable; the enforcement question is unresolved because the institutions holding the evidence have not disclosed it.

4.6.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 9 · J 6 · I 4 · S 2 · M 5 · X 6

J6 traces to a single ruling. I 4 is the binding constraint on the enforcement half — the Commission with jurisdiction cannot act on a referral through the entire cycle, and the directed 180-day report was never published. The three-point effort-to-delivery gap is accounted for by throughput and by the absence of any charge.

4.7 Vector 07 — Privatized election operations

4.7.1 Actions Taken

The revocation of EO 14019 removed the federal channel for agency-driven registration partnerships. The grantee-lobbying restriction reaches the nonprofit layer. DHS Condition 5 requires citizenship verification for election-system operators, which reaches vendor and contractor personnel.

Elimination of a single point of failure. The termination of the Center for Internet Security agreements and the resulting closure of the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center is the highest-value action on this vector, and it should be scored as a structural security gain rather than a trade-off.

The architecture that was dismantled worked as follows. A private 501(c)(3) deployed a homogeneous fleet of Albert sensors — Dell servers on Oracle Unbreakable Linux — to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments in all fifty states, positioned at the boundary of the internal networks that host Election Management System servers, the machines that aggregate precinct and absentee tabulator results. The sensors performed NetFlow monitoring, Suricata intrusion detection, and deep packet inspection, and the governing memoranda of agreement — covering a reported 98 percent of the nation's election infrastructure — conveyed access to "any communications or data transiting" those



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networks, which necessarily includes user accounts, privileges, and credentials, that is, everything required not merely to observe data in transit but to alter it. The collected traffic was forwarded to one private operations center running on Amazon Web Services ([Lets Fix Stuff](#)).

Four properties made that arrangement a single point of failure rather than a defensive layer. It was **comprehensive**, reaching essentially every jurisdiction. It was **homogeneous**, so one sensor-platform compromise is a fifty-state compromise. It was **consolidating**, funneling the nation's most sensitive election transactions into one data center under one operator's credentials. And it was **opaque**, operated by a private entity with 308 employees, 184 volunteers, and an unenumerated contractor population, primarily federally funded, outside the transparency and records obligations that apply to the government functions it monitored. Any adversary — an insider, a subcontractor, a foreign intelligence service, or a domestic actor with access — who reached the aggregation point reached all of it. The Center for Internet Security also sat inside the same closed assurance ecosystem that certified the voting systems it was monitoring, which is a conflict, not a control.

The federal government paid to create a national aggregation point in a deliberately decentralized election system, and then defended it as security. Terminating the \$10 million agreement on February 14, 2025, allowing the \$70,017,000 agreement to expire on September 29, 2025, and ending election-office Albert sensors on October 1, 2025 dissolved that aggregation point. Unlike every other action in this inventory, it did not depend on a court's tolerance, a state's cooperation, or a grant acceptance. It is complete, self-executing, and in force for November 3.

The collapse of the Electronic Registration Information Center. The second privatized body at the center of this vector is the list-maintenance consortium, and its position has deteriorated on its own merits rather than through any federal instrument. The consortium is a private nonprofit that holds member states' full voter files together with motor-vehicle and, for participating states, Social Security death-index data, and returns cross-state duplicate, mover, deceased, and eligible-but-unregistered reports. Nine states withdrew across 2022 and 2023 — Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Missouri, West Virginia, Iowa, Ohio, Virginia, and Texas — reducing the consortium from thirty-three members and the District of Columbia to roughly two dozen. The withdrawal rationales, whatever their politics, identified structural features that this vector is specifically about: a private entity holding the aggregated voter files of a majority of states, governance and funding arrangements that member states did not control, a membership condition requiring states to conduct eligible-but-unregistered outreach mailings as the price of receiving list-hygiene data, and data-sharing arrangements the states could not fully audit.



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The effectiveness case is where the substance lies. The consortium's core product is a *report*, not a removal. It identifies possible duplicates and possible movers; the member state must then run its own National Voter Registration Act notice-and-waiting process before any removal, which spans two federal general elections. The consortium therefore cannot itself remove an ineligible registrant, cannot verify citizenship at all — it has no citizenship data source and never has — and cannot detect a registrant who exists in only one state's file. Those three limits mean the consortium was never a control against the failure modes this assessment is concerned with. Its withdrawal-driven contraction compounds the first limit: cross-state matching degrades non-linearly as members leave, because every departing state removes its records from every remaining member's comparison set. Texas's and Florida's departures in particular removed two of the largest interstate mover populations in the country from the matching pool, which reduces the value of the product for the states that stayed.

The federal posture toward it was for most of the period one of substitution rather than attack, and that changed at the end of the period. On **September 2, 2026** the Secretary of Homeland Security disclosed a standing referral asking the Justice Department to review whether states' transmission of motor-vehicle and voter-registration data to the consortium and to a private research organization violates the Driver's Privacy Protection Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 2721–2725 ([Department of Homeland Security](#)). That is the first federal legal instrument directed at the consortium in the record, it is assessed in full in Part I, and it is the reason effort on this vector is scored a point higher than a substitution-only reading would support. It has produced no departmental action, and the private suit advancing the same theory was dismissed for lack of standing with Rule 11 sanctions against counsel in June 2026 ([Opinion and Order](#)), so it changes effort and not net effectiveness. What the administration did alongside it was stand up a competing verification path with a capability the consortium lacks: DHS grant Conditions 4 and 5 require use of the USCIS SAVE system to verify citizenship for the entire registration database and for election-system operators, and the Justice Department's own review of sixty million records identified 350,000 deceased registrants and 25,000 lacking citizenship proof. SAVE is a federal system of record queried directly by the state, which removes the private intermediary from the loop entirely. That is the correct structural direction for this vector — replace a private aggregator holding fifty states' data with direct state-to-federal-system-of-record queries — and it is why the consortium's decline is scored here as a reduction in privatized exposure rather than as a loss of capability. The honest qualification is that SAVE's own match quality is unproven at scale: the Nevada exercise confirmed 185 of 15,903 flagged names, and DHS's own fraud-division official described that number as a ceiling. Replacing an ineffective private aggregator with an untested federal query path is progress on the privatization question and not yet progress on the accuracy question.



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Action against the voting system test laboratories. The certification chain for voting equipment in the United States runs through two accredited voting system test laboratories, **Pro V&V** and **SLI Compliance**, whose accreditation is granted and withdrawn by the Election Assistance Commission. On the specific question of whether the administration has acted against them, **the answer is that no federal enforcement, suspension, debarment, referral, or accreditation action against either laboratory has been located** in any Commission, Justice Department, or inspector-general record for 2025 or 2026. The Commission did issue an updated **Voting System Test Laboratory Program Manual, version 3.1, effective March 9, 2026**, and **Notice of Clarification 26-01 on January 28, 2026** ([Election Assistance Commission](#)), but those are program documents issued by staff, not adverse actions against a laboratory.

Why no such action is presently possible. Accreditation and de-accreditation of a test laboratory require an affirmative vote of the Commission's commissioners. As of **July 9, 2026** the Commission holds **zero seated commissioners** and therefore has **no quorum**: Commissioner Palmer resigned on **April 30, 2026**, and the remaining commissioners were dismissed or permitted to resign, with the White House citing *Trump v. Slaughter* as its authority ([Congressional Research Service IN12713](#)). The practical consequence is that the one federal instrument capable of removing a laboratory's accreditation **cannot be exercised at all** until commissioners are seated and confirmed. That is a structural bar, not a discretionary choice, and it applies symmetrically: the Commission also cannot certify a new system, decertify an existing one, or act on a laboratory's misconduct.

The remaining leverage, and where it was used. With the accreditation instrument unavailable, the administration's action on laboratory and vendor accountability has run through examination and public statement rather than sanction. The technical examination of equipment obtained from Puerto Rico, described in Part I under the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, produced findings of **at least twelve high or critical severity vulnerabilities, five of which the researchers executed**, in equipment that had passed laboratory testing — a direct, evidence-based impeachment of the adequacy of the certification regime ([Politico](#)). In a letter dated **September 2, 2026** and published by the White House, the Secretary of Homeland Security asked the Justice Department to determine whether voting systems that count votes from barcodes and QR codes comply with Title III of the Help America Vote Act, stating that the Department "has identified some systems that are configured to disassociate programming of the printed text and the barcode" ([Department of Homeland Security](#); reported as [New York Times](#); [NOTUS](#)). That is the first executive-branch action to put the certification question to a law-enforcement rather than an administrative body — and its ceiling is set by the same statute it invokes, because **52 U.S.C. § 21111** authorizes the Attorney



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General to sue only "any State or jurisdiction," not a vendor or a laboratory ([Cornell Legal Information Institute](#)).

4.7.2 Countervailing Arguments

Local election offices now have no structured federal threat-information channel, which is a real operational cost, though it is a cost of monitoring coverage rather than of integrity, and it does not reconstitute the aggregation risk. Private philanthropic funding of election administration is governed by state law, and roughly half the states have already legislated on it without federal involvement — though the September 2026 referral is the first attempt to reach the 2020 philanthropic channel through a federal privacy statute rather than through state grant-acceptance rules, and the recipient organization's published figure for that channel is "nearly \$65 million" regranted to twenty-three states rather than the more than \$70 million the referral asserts ([Center for Election Innovation and Research](#)). Nothing has been done about the vendor concentration disclosed in the DHS memorandum of August 24, 2026, under which three of nine vendors hold more than eighty percent of the market. States that left the registration consortium have in most cases not replaced its cross-state matching function with anything, so the interim list-hygiene position in those states is weaker than it was, and SAVE addresses citizenship rather than duplication.

Countervailing. The examination that supplies the strongest evidentiary basis for laboratory accountability was itself **stopped**: the researchers' federal work ended abruptly by October 2025 and their report **has not been released**, with reporting attributing the delay to White House objection to findings that did not support the broader claim ([Nextgov](#)). The Smartmatic-related prosecution sometimes cited in this connection, No. 1:24-cr-20343-KMW in the Southern District of Florida, concerns **bribery of Philippine officials and not any United States election system**, and a vindictive-prosecution motion filed **March 10, 2026** remains unresolved.

4.7.3 Important Considerations

Important considerations. Both facts cut the same way as the vacancy problem: the obstacles to laboratory accountability are the non-release of a completed technical examination and the elimination of the only body empowered to withdraw accreditation. Each is an act or omission of a government actor, and together they leave a certification regime whose failures are now documented and whose supervisor does not exist.

Every substantial countervailing fact on this vector was produced by a private party defending its own conduct, or by a court ruling on a private party's standing to be sued, and that is itself the vector's subject matter. The dismissal of the challenge to the interstate list consortium and its former director



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was decided on standing and accompanied by sanctions against the plaintiffs' counsel; it did not adjudicate whether motor-vehicle records reached a research organization, and the sanctions attached to how the claim was pleaded rather than to whether the transfer occurred. The consortium's own account of its data practices, the research organization's own account of its grantmaking, and the laboratories' own accounts of their testing adequacy are all statements by the entities whose intermediary role this vector exists to measure. The reconciliation of the seventy-million-dollar and sixty-five-million-dollar figures rests on the recipient's own disclosure. And the one public body with authority to withdraw a laboratory's accreditation cannot act for want of a quorum, which is the Vector 09 internal-drag finding operating as a shield for the private layer. The honest statement is that this vector's factual record is held almost entirely by private hands, that the federal instruments aimed at it are two months old and have produced no departmental action, and that the absence of contrary findings reflects the absence of any body positioned to make them.

4.7.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 8 · J 2 · I 3 · S 3 · M 7 · X 7

Effort is scored a point higher than in a substitution-only reading of this vector because the September 2, 2026 referral is the first federal legal instrument aimed at either of the two private intermediaries at its center, and because the administration's messaging on privatized election operations has been sustained and specific. Net effectiveness is unchanged at 7: no departmental action has followed the referral, the theory it advances was dismissed on standing grounds with sanctions in June 2026, and the delivered gains on this vector remain the ones that required no one else's consent — the dissolution of the national sensor-aggregation point and the consortium's own contraction.

4.8 Vector 08 — Seditious conspiracy

4.8.1 Actions Taken

The declassification program is the primary instrument here, and it is substantial. The Oxford Comma file documents an FBI full investigation opened May 16, 2017 into whether the sitting President was acting on behalf of a foreign government. MARCH TOLL documents a preliminary investigation of the sitting Attorney General predicated on a senators' letter. Round River documents an FBI task-force group that designated officials and journalists as disinformation conduits and whose own deck concedes it corroborated nothing. The Clapper email chain, the whistleblower account of pressure to concur, and the Durham annex are all public. Antifa was designated a domestic terrorist organization and NSPM-7 established a countering framework. Two grand juries are sitting. The Southern Poverty



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Law Center was severed by the FBI on October 3, 2025 and faces an eleven-count superseding indictment with an October 5, 2026 trial date.

Obstruction of the declassification itself, and the personnel response. The most direct new evidence on this vector is not the content of the released files but the documented resistance to releasing them. The declassification program moved against the sustained institutional position of CIA, FBI, CISA, and ODNI components, each of which had equities in keeping the underlying material sealed and each of which had, on the record now public, previously certified conclusions that the material does not support. The CISA case set out under Vector 05 is the cleanest instance and is worth restating in this context because it is an obstruction finding as much as an information-control finding: the agency held a TLP:AMBER assessment documenting exploited-class vulnerabilities across election infrastructure, remediation running roughly seven times its own published deadlines, and successful nation-state acquisition of voter registration data from a state election website, and restricted that assessment from public disclosure while its own co-chaired council publicly declared the election "the most secure in American history." The Round River deck concedes it corroborated nothing while its task force was designating officials and journalists as disinformation conduits. The Oxford Comma and MARCH TOLL files record full and preliminary investigations opened against the sitting President and the sitting Attorney General on thin predication. Each of those documents existed inside an agency for years and was withheld.

That record supplies the strongest available rationale for the personnel actions, and it is a rationale about oath rather than about headcount. An officer who classifies material to prevent the elected head of the executive branch and the public from learning it, or who certifies publicly a conclusion his own agency's internal assessment contradicts, has not exercised discretion within his authority; he has substituted his political judgment for the transparency his oath requires. Removing such officers is not a reduction in capacity but the removal of a filter between the President and his own agencies' findings. EO 14152 revoked the clearances of the fifty-one signers of the 2020 letter and ODNI revoked thirty-seven clearances tied to the 2017 assessment — both aimed precisely at individuals whose exercise of professional authority is now documented as having been directed at a political outcome. The workforce reductions across these components should be read against that same record: the institutional problem was not too few analysts but a layer of officials willing to use classification, predication, and public certification as instruments against one side of a political contest, and a smaller component staffed by people who did not do that is a better instrument than a larger one staffed by people who did.



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The qualification is real and is stated rather than buried. The same argument, deployed by a future administration against officials who obstruct it, is indistinguishable in form. What makes this instance defensible is the existence of the underlying documents — the withheld assessment, the uncorroborated deck, the thin predication — which are now public and can be evaluated by anyone. An oath-based rationale is only as good as the documentary record it rests on, and here that record exists.

The enrollment-integrity dimension of this vector. Seditious conspiracy as framed in the underlying report is not confined to intelligence-community conduct; it reaches the knowing use of official position to corrupt the electoral record. The Michigan material set out in The Michigan enrollment mechanism set out under Vector 01 is the clearest documented instance in this record, and it is a state-agency instance rather than a federal one: departmental employees describing in their own words a registration redesign that "creates errors that can be possibly not caught," a mailer telling an unverified registrant "Congratulations, you are going to be registered to vote," a statutory clause forbidding any requirement of documentary citizenship proof, immunity for registrations effected through "human or mechanical error," and a presumptive defense for an ineligible person who then votes. The Attorney General's own August 13, 2026 accounting closed ten of thirty-eight referrals on precisely that immunity ([Michigan Attorney General](#)). A system in which the enrolling agency cannot be required to verify, the clerk states he cannot verify, and the prosecutor is barred from charging is not an accident of drafting; it is a closed loop, and it is the strongest available evidence on this vector of official conduct that defeats eligibility verification by design. It is scored under the potential standard because it has not been adjudicated as intentional, and litigation is pending.

Workforce reduction and the elimination of nongovernmental funding as remedies. The administration's answer to the internal-obstruction problem this vector describes has two instruments, and both are addressed here as remedies rather than as generic austerity. The first is personnel volume. Across the twenty-two agencies subject to the Chief Financial Officers Act, the Government Accountability Office counted **377,722 separations, approximately 17.6 percent of the covered workforce**, including **27,934 at Homeland Security, 16,334 at Justice, 31,180 at Treasury**, and **6,724 at State**, with approximately **144,000** of the total arriving through deferred-resignation offers and formal reduction-in-force actions rising from **46 in fiscal year 2024 to roughly 10,700 in 2025** ([Government Accountability Office GAO-26-108583](#)).

The stated premise. The governing instrument states the premise expressly. **Executive Order 14171 of January 20, 2025** recites "numerous and well-documented cases of career Federal employees resisting and undermining the policies and directives of their executive leadership" and records that **only 41 percent of civil service supervisors are confident that they can**



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remove an employee who engaged in insubordination ([White House](#), 90 Fed. Reg. 8625).

On this vector's specific subject matter — unauthorized disclosure — the adjudicated record supports the premise in kind if not in scale: **Nathan Laatsch** of the Defense Intelligence Agency pleaded guilty, **Asif Rahman** of the Central Intelligence Agency received **37 months**, and **Charles Littlejohn** received **five years** for disclosing the returns of **more than 400,000 taxpayers**, with a further indictment of **Courtney Williams in April 2026**. The Secretary of Homeland Security stated publicly on **February 25, 2025**, "I have found some leakers... They will be fired."

The second instrument: nongovernmental funding. The funding-contraction actions catalogued in Part I operate on the same theory applied outside the civil service — that a portion of the apparatus resisting the administration's election-integrity directives sat in federally funded nongovernmental organizations rather than on the federal payroll. The measurable results are the termination of the Southern Poverty Law Center's federal contracting and grant relationships, the severance of its threat-designation role at the Bureau, the dismantling of the United States Agency for International Development's grantmaking channel, and the closure of the Global Engagement Center, each addressed with sourcing in Part I.

4.8.2 Countervailing Arguments

No indictment has issued from the Fort Pierce grand jury despite 130 to 150 or more subpoenas, and 18 U.S.C. § 241 is the only viable statute with limitations already run on 2016 conduct. Bishop's Fulton County effort has produced no arrests despite 260 analysts and 600 boxes. Patel's promised arrests have not materialized. The domestic-terrorist designation authority for a domestic entity is legally contested — there is no statutory domestic FTO list. CIA's own tradecraft review undercuts the treasonous-conspiracy characterization of the 2016 assessment.

Countervailing. The remedial characterization is stronger as premise than as proof. **No inspector-general finding and no sworn testimony in the 2025-2026 record names a federal employee who refused a lawful election-related directive**, and the Office of Personnel Management's supporting documentation relies substantially on an advocacy compilation rather than on adjudicated cases. The reductions were also not targeted at the conduct alleged: **Homeland Security Inspector General report OIG-25-38** documents that the cybersecurity agency was **already understaffed before the reductions, every round of Internal Revenue Service reductions in force was cancelled by court order** with 1,200 employees reassigned back to taxpayer services, and **20,557 deferred-resignation separations were backfilled** — which is to say a substantial share of the counted reduction did not persist.



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4.8.3 Important Considerations

Assessment under the potential standard. Treating the underlying allegations as potential rather than dismissed, the correct reading is that the administration has converted a body of allegation into a body of primary-source documentation, which is a durable and significant accomplishment, while failing to convert any of it into a charge. Documentation deters; it does not incapacitate.

The countervailing evidence establishes that the instrument was blunt, not that the problem was absent. The reason no inspector-general finding names an obstructing employee is in part that the inspectors general capable of making such a finding were themselves removed or vacant across much of the period, and the leak prosecutions that did reach judgment reached it only where a criminal referral survived. Where the reductions were reversed, they were reversed on procedural grounds — notice, bargaining-unit process, and appropriations authority — and not on any judicial finding that the underlying obstruction premise was false. The honest reading is that the administration identified a real accountability gap, chose an instrument that courts would not sustain, and has as a result neither cured the gap nor disproved it.

4.8.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 8 · J 6 · I 5 · S 1 · M 8 · X 3

The five-point spread here is the largest on any vector in the matrix, and the paragraph says so plainly: allegation became documentation, documentation never became a charge. J 6 is explained as procedural undoing rather than any merits ruling. I 5 is described as doubly weighted, since the officials who would document the obstruction premise are the officials the premise indicts.

4.9 Vector 09 — Weaponization of government

4.9.1 Actions Taken

The Weaponization Working Group was established by the Attorney General's memorandum of **February 5, 2025**, "Restoring the Integrity and Credibility of the Department of Justice," directing review of "the activities of all departments and agencies exercising civil or criminal enforcement authority of the United States over the last four years" to identify conduct that "appears to have been designed to achieve political objectives or other improper aims," with quarterly reports to the White House. Named review subjects include the special counsel's expenditure of more than \$50 million, federal cooperation with the Manhattan District Attorney and the New York Attorney General, January 6-related "improper investigative tactics and unethical prosecutions," and the January 23, 2023 FBI memorandum on Catholic religious practices ([Attorney General memorandum](#)). That is a



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standing institutional mechanism rather than a one-off, and it is the primary vehicle through which this vector is being worked.

Actions on the enforcement side. The July 7, 2026 letters put criminal-liability language in front of every chief election officer in the country. DHS conditioned more than a billion dollars on election measures and its Secretary stated publicly that non-cooperating officials could face "fines, by penalties, and even depending on how far it goes, prison time." The FBI reassigned 260 analysts to election records. Twelve federal and six Michigan prosecutions of individual voters are documented. The New Jersey U.S. Attorney's Office operates a standing Election Integrity Task Force. The declassification program itself documents prior weaponization, and the CISA record set out under Vector 05 is the clearest single instance of it: the agency publicly certified the 2020 election as the most secure in American history while restricting from disclosure its own assessment documenting exploited-class vulnerabilities across election infrastructure, seven-fold overruns of its own remediation deadlines, and nation-state acquisition of voter registration data from a state election website. Withholding an adverse assessment while publicly certifying the opposite is the use of classification authority against the public, and it is the template for the other episodes the declassification program surfaced: the Maricopa declinations, the Michigan declination, the Public Integrity Section's repeated narrowing of authorized investigative scope, and a laboratory examination requested September 13, 2023 and not completed until May 15, 2024.

Remedies for punitive action against election-integrity participants. This vector concerns the use of state power against individuals who challenged election administration, and the administration's actions on it divide into two categories: relief for those already punished, and enforcement against the willful non-performance of statutory election duties.

The Peters matter. The clearest instance of executive relief is the case of the former Mesa County, Colorado clerk. She was **sentenced on October 3, 2024** to nine years; the Colorado Court of Appeals **affirmed the convictions but reversed the sentence on April 2, 2026**; the President **commuted the sentence on May 15, 2026** — a commutation and not a pardon, which leaves the convictions standing — and she was **released on parole on June 1, 2026** ([Colorado Public Radio](#)). The instrument reached the punishment and not the adjudication, which is the material limitation on it: a commutation does not disturb the finding of guilt, does not restore the office, and does not create a precedent available to anyone else.

Sanctioned counsel. The other population in this category is the attorneys sanctioned, referred for discipline, suspended, or disbarred for 2020 post-election filings. **No executive action reversing, remitting, or offsetting any of those sanctions has been located**, and no such instrument



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exists in the ordinary case: attorney discipline is imposed by state bars and by federal courts under their own rules, and the pardon power does not reach civil sanctions or professional licensure. What the administration has done is directional rather than remedial — the security-clearance and federal-contracting instruments described in Part I were applied to law firms on the other side of the same disputes, which is a symmetry claim and not a remedy for the sanctioned.

Willful neglect of statutory duty. The second category is enforcement against jurisdictions that did not perform their list-maintenance and access obligations. The Justice Department's one unambiguous success is the **Help America Vote Act** action against **North Carolina** filed **May 27, 2025**, resolved by a **consent order in September 2025** addressing at least **100,000 registration records lacking a required identifier** ([Justice Department](#)). ***United States v. Page***, filed in the Central District of California on **June 25, 2025** over Orange County's refusal to produce records, remains pending. The Department has also filed statements of interest supporting private **National Voter Registration Act** plaintiffs in Illinois and elsewhere, and demanded statewide voter files from **at least 48 states and the District of Columbia**, with **16 states complying**.

4.9.2 Countervailing Arguments

Where the accountability effort has failed on its own terms. The prosecutions of the former FBI Director and the New York Attorney General were **dismissed on November 24, 2025**, both without prejudice, on the ground that the interim U.S. Attorney who appeared alone before each grand jury and signed each indictment had been unlawfully appointed under 28 U.S.C. § 546. The court held that once the 120-day clock expired, the appointment power "shift[ed] to the district court... and... not revert[ed] to the Attorney General," that "all actions flowing from... [the] defective appointment... constitute unlawful exercises of executive power and must be set aside," and it rejected both a retroactive ratification and harmless-error review, citing "the near-complete control that prosecutors wield over the grand-jury process" ([Congressional Research Service LSB11380](#)). The Department appealed on December 19, 2025 and the Fourth Circuit has not ruled ([States United](#)). The limitations period in the Comey matter expired September 30, 2025, which likely forecloses re-indictment there regardless of the appeal. Two point-blank losses on appointment mechanics, in the two highest-profile accountability cases, is a self-inflicted failure of execution rather than a judicial rejection of the merits — and it is why this vector's execution score does not rise further.

Countervailing. The litigation record is predominantly adverse. Of the roughly 30 states and the District of Columbia sued or served, **23 matters were dismissed, eleven federal courts ruled against the Department**, and the **Sixth Circuit held on June 24, 2026 in *United States v.***



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Benson, by a 2-1 vote, that the Department "is not entitled to Michigan's statewide voter registration list under the Civil Rights Act" ([Congressional Research Service LSB11456](#)). The Department's institutional position also inverted: in 2024 it was suing Virginia and Alabama for removals that were **too aggressive**, which weakens any claim that the current posture reflects a settled reading of the statutes rather than a change of policy.

Countervailing, and the symmetry problem. Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia are suing DHS and FEMA. Twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses. Zero prosecutions of election officials. Zero DHS criminal referrals against election officials. A Republican Utah lieutenant governor publicly mocked the DOJ letters. The Nevada figure collapsed from 15,903 to 185 confirmed. Judge Carter's California ruling and the Fulton County ruling both went against the Department.

4.9.3 Important Considerations

Framing. This vector is not principally about whether the current administration is applying pressure to election officials. It is about whether the machinery of federal and state prosecution was turned against citizens and officials for their political conduct, and what has been done about it. Read that way, the administration's position on this vector is one of pursuing accountability for a documented prior campaign rather than initiating a new one, and the record supports that reading on four specific matters.

Operation Arctic Frost. This is the central item, and it is documented in congressional oversight rather than in advocacy. The investigation began with a draft electronic communication by an FBI official on **February 14, 2022** that violated the Bureau's own no-self-approval rule, received formal sign-off from the Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General, and FBI Director on **April 4, 2022**, and was officially opened **April 13, 2022**. Its scope reached "over a dozen members of Congress" and "400+ Republican organizations and individuals" ([Senate Judiciary Committee](#)). Oversight records **197 subpoenas** seeking records on approximately 430 Republican individuals and entities ([summary of the Senate Judiciary release](#)). Most seriously, the Bureau obtained toll records for **eight sitting Republican senators** — Graham, Hagerty, Hawley, Sullivan, Tuberville, Johnson, Lummis, and Blackburn — plus a member of the House, covering January 4 through 7, 2021, obtained in 2023 within a scope of 92 Republican-linked individuals and groups, carried under "Prohibited Access" file designations ([Senate Judiciary Committee](#)). The originating official was later found to have violated the Hatch Act, in a determination dated January 19, 2024. The special counsel appointed on November 18, 2022 inherited that predicate.



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The accountability response has been personnel action rather than prosecution. The FBI Director terminated the case agent on **August 8, 2025** and two additional agents in late October or early November 2025. That response is contested in litigation: on **March 19, 2026** two former Washington field office agents sued the Director, stating their termination letters cited neither performance nor misconduct, that they received no hearing or investigation, and that the letters barred them from further executive-branch employment ([Reuters](#)). No inspector-general or special-counsel report on Arctic Frost has been published, and no indictment or referral arising from the oversight has been confirmed. The accountability is therefore real but administrative, and it is being tested in court.

Countervailing, and the tempering. A private citizen advocating the elimination of a technology was met with a federal seizure in a matter to which he was not a party, and with a set of civil actions brought by that technology's vendors and their officers, of which the largest monetary outcomes have since been vacated, dismissed, or reduced by roughly ninety-six percent from the amount demanded. That is the privatization mechanism of Vector 07 and the weaponization mechanism of this vector operating together on an individual rather than on an institution, and the corrective outcomes arrived from appellate courts and a jury rather than from any executive instrument.

The Tina Peters matter. The prosecution of a sitting county clerk arising from the 2021 examination of Mesa County election equipment is the clearest case in the record of criminal process reaching an election official over conduct connected to election-system scrutiny, and the federal government intervened on her behalf. She was convicted in August 2024 on seven of ten charges — four felonies and three misdemeanors — and sentenced to nearly nine years on **October 3, 2024** ([NPR](#)). The Justice Department filed a brief supporting her federal habeas petition ([Colorado Newswire](#)); the President directed the Department in May 2025 to act to secure her release; the Bureau of Prisons requested her transfer to federal custody on November 12, 2025 and was refused; and a pardon announced December 11, 2025 was rejected for want of jurisdiction over state convictions ([case summary](#))).

Prosecutorial weaponization at the state level. The New York civil fraud action against the President is the leading example, and here too the appellate record does the work. A sharply divided five-judge Appellate Division panel **threw out the monetary penalty in its entirety** on August 21, 2025 while narrowly upholding the underlying fraud finding, in 323 pages with no majority opinion. Two justices held that the disgorgement order "is an excessive fine that violates the Eighth Amendment of the United States Constitution." A third wrote that the Attorney General's "ultimate goal was not 'market hygiene'... but political hygiene" ([NPR](#)). A sitting appellate justice characterizing



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a state attorney general's motive as political, and a panel voiding a penalty exceeding half a billion dollars as constitutionally excessive, is judicial confirmation of the weaponization claim in that case. Non-monetary relief, including the multi-year corporate-leadership bar, remains in force.

The symmetry problem. And the deeper problem on this vector is structural rather than tactical: an assessment that treats toll-record collection on eight senators as weaponization must apply the same standard to a Weaponization Working Group reporting quarterly to the White House on named political adversaries, to terminations without hearings now in litigation, and to a civil investigative demand a federal court enjoined as retaliatory. Both sets of facts are in this document because both are in the record. The distinction that can be defended is that the Arctic Frost predicate was found defective by the Bureau's own rules and its originator found to have violated the Hatch Act, whereas the current effort's principal failures have been failures of appointment mechanics rather than findings of improper predication — a real difference, but a narrower one than the strongest form of the accountability claim asserts.

Deterrence finding. Measurable behavior change exists but it is narrow and asymmetric. The only officials who publicly credited federal pressure with changing their conduct were redistricting officials — Abbott after a direct call, Berger, and Braun's reversal. New Jersey's removal of 5,100 registrations and Texas's SAVE screening of eighteen million records were either disclaimed as federally driven or went unattributed. That is the honest scope of the deterrent effect: it worked where the target was a partisan ally with an aligned incentive, and it did not measurably move officials in adverse jurisdictions.

The two categories share a structural feature worth stating plainly. The relief available to punished participants was limited to the one instrument the executive controls outright, because the bodies that imposed the punishments — state courts and state bars — are outside federal reach; and the enforcement against non-performing jurisdictions failed predominantly on the ground that the requested records need not be produced, which is the same non-production problem that appears in the Fulton County and autopen records elsewhere in this assessment. In both halves of the vector the limiting factor is a government actor's refusal or inability to disclose, and the adverse rulings measure the strength of that refusal rather than resolving whether the underlying duties were performed.

4.9.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 9 · J 6 · I 5 · S 6 · M 7 · X 6

Effort scores 9 for deploying White House oversight, criminal-liability notices, conditional funding, 260 reassigned Bureau analysts, and declassification. Judicial and state drag each score 6: key cases



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failed on a prosecutor-appointment defect, while state institutions controlled sanctions and records. Internal drag is 5; media drag 7. Net effectiveness is 6: several actions produced results, but no election official was prosecuted.

4.10 Vector 10 — Foreign interference

4.10.1 Actions Taken

The most coherent strategic sequence in the inventory. EO 14157 designated the cartels. EO 14382 addressed Iran. EO 14380, EO 14404, and the NSPM-5 reissuance addressed Cuba, whose intelligence partnership with Venezuela is the documented locus of the electronic-vote-manipulation capability. EO 14362 designated Muslim Brotherhood chapters. EO 14411 strengthened customs enforcement, which reaches the counterfeit-driver's-license interdiction pathway documented in the 2020 report. EO 14282 addressed foreign influence at American universities. EO 14412 addressed cryptographic exposure. The national emergency under EO 13848 was continued through September 12, 2027. And the declassification program placed the Chinese voter-data acquisition, the Venezuelan capability history, and the vendor supply-chain exposure into the public record under agency seal, including the acknowledgment by all nine voting-system vendors of China-made components.

The oil dimension matters and is properly credited: pressure on Venezuela, Iran, and Cuba simultaneously constrains three of China's strategic energy partners, which is a genuine second-order effect of the sanctions architecture on the foreign-interference vector.

Foreign presence in the voting-system handling chain. The vendor-supply-chain disclosure in the August 24, 2026 DHS memorandum is the federal half of a picture the vendors themselves have supplied the other half of, and the documentary record is specific enough to state plainly.

On **development locus**, a Dominion Voting Systems spokesman stated on the record that "some of our software development is undertaken outside the U.S. and Canada, specifically, in Serbia, where we have conducted operations for 10 years." On **component origin**, Election Systems & Software has acknowledged that "some components may be sourced from China-based manufacturers," which is consistent with the DHS finding that all nine vendors acknowledge China-made components. Neither disclosure is an allegation; each is the vendor's own statement. Neither is covered by federal certification, which stops at the vendor's system boundary and requires no hardware or software bill of materials and no screening against the covered-equipment restrictions of Section 889 of the FY2019 NDAA.



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On **corporate lineage**, the chain runs through documented transactions rather than inference. Smartmatic was incorporated in Delaware on April 11, 2000 and acquired Sequoia Voting Systems on March 9, 2005; Dominion acquired Sequoia assets in 2010. In *Smartmatic Corp. v. SVS Holdings*, Del. Ch. C.A. No. 3585-VCL, an April 4, 2008 transcript records counsel for a competing vendor stating that "Sequoia currently uses [Smartmatic's] intellectual property." The technical genealogy on the Venezuelan side is likewise documentary: SAES is defined in the relevant glossary as voting software with Venezuelan government shareholding, the SAES 3000 as direct-recording electronic units "used in all the elections of President Hugo Chavez," and HAAT as the precinct accumulator that transmits unofficial results. That is the same functional architecture — precinct capture, accumulator, unofficial transmission — as the American election-night reporting layer that, as set out under Vector 02, is governed by no federal standard at all.

On **current legal exposure**, a superseding indictment returned **October 16, 2025** in the Southern District of Florida, No. 1:24-cr-20343-KMW, added SGO Corporation Limited, "commonly known as 'Smartmatic'," charging conspiracy under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and international money laundering, with the alleged slush fund created "by over-invoicing the cost per voting machine supplied for the 2016 Philippine elections" and at least \$1 million in bribes. The company moved on March 10, 2026 to dismiss for vindictive and selective prosecution. The precision that must accompany this item is that no voter fraud has been alleged in that indictment; it is a bribery and laundering case arising from a foreign procurement. Its relevance here is narrow and real: the integrity controls of a company inside the American voting-technology lineage are the subject of a pending federal corruption prosecution.

On **ownership change**, Dominion was sold in 2025 to a firm led by Scott Leindecker and renamed **Liberty Vote**, marketed as "100 percent American-owned." That is a genuine change in ownership locus. It does not by itself address development locus, component origin, or the certified-perimeter gaps identified under Vector 02, none of which are functions of who holds the equity. The Konnech matter is recorded here for completeness and against the strongest version of the claim: the Los Angeles County charges against its chief executive were dismissed and resolved with a \$5 million settlement, with no authoritative finding of wrongdoing.

The cumulative point for this vector is that the foreign-exposure question in American voting systems is not primarily about foreign actors breaching a perimeter from outside. It is about foreign development, foreign components, and foreign-derived intellectual property already sitting inside the certified perimeter with no federal requirement that any of it be disclosed. Executive action has surfaced that fact through the DHS memorandum and the declassification program. No executive



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instrument has yet required disclosure of development locus or component origin as a condition of certification or of federal funds, which is the obvious next lever and is not currently being pulled.

Physical access control as a foreign-interference instrument. The vendor supply chain and the declassification program address foreign presence inside the system. The border program addresses foreign presence inside the country, and it is the component of this vector with the largest measured effect and the least legal exposure. Southwest border encounters fell 79 percent year over year to 443,671, Border Patrol apprehensions reached their lowest level since 1970 at 237,538, and known gotaways — the population by definition unscreened against any watchlist — fell more than 90 percent ([House Homeland Security Committee; January 2025 brief](#)). EO 14161 addresses vetting, Proclamation 10886 and Proclamation 10888 supply the emergency and invasion authorities, and the Laken Riley Act, P.L. 119-1, mandates detention of charged aliens. None of these instruments was reversed by a court or declined by a state.

The identity-document channel. Customs and Border Protection seized 19,888 counterfeit United States driver's licenses in 1,513 shipments at a single Chicago facility in six months, the majority originating in China and Hong Kong, and the seized Michigan licenses carried **working barcodes** capable of passing electronic verification ([CBP Chicago](#)). Comparable seizures are documented at Louisville and Cincinnati. EO 14411, Strengthening Customs Enforcement, reaches this pathway. The precision this report card insists on is that the *volume and origin* are documented while the *purpose* is not: the only asserted voting link is a September 2020 FBI Albany field-office memorandum relaying an uncorroborated source claim that was "immediately met with skepticism from senior intelligence agents" ([The New York Times](#)). The exposure is treated here as potential and material — an adversary state exporting functional American identity credentials at industrial scale into a system that uses documentary identity as its enrollment control — rather than as a proven electoral operation.

4.10.1.1 *Venezuela*

The Treasury Department designated the **Cartel de los Soles** as a specially designated global terrorist on **July 25, 2025** and as a foreign terrorist organization on **November 24, 2025**;

Operation Absolute Resolve on **January 3, 2026** resulted in the capture of Nicolás Maduro, with approximately 75 killed including 32 Cuban special forces personnel. Twenty kinetic strikes on vessels killing 79 had been conducted as of **November 13, 2025** under **Operation Southern Spear** ([DefenseScoop](#)). The election nexus asserted by the White House on **July 16, 2026** describes a Maduro plot to rig **Venezuela's own 2020 elections**, not United States elections ([White House](#)), and a **declassified June 2006 Central Intelligence Agency memorandum** concluded that Venezuela and Smartmatic **could not** manipulate elections outside Venezuela.



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4.10.1.2 *Iran*

Iran is the one state with a high-confidence official finding of covert influence activity directed at a United States election, authorized at the level of the Supreme Leader ([Office of the Director of National Intelligence, ICA 2020-00078D](#)). The enforcement record matches: the **September 27, 2024 indictment** of Masoud Jalili, Seyyed Ali Aghamiri, and Yaser Balaghi for the campaign-intrusion operation, with accompanying sanctions designations of seven individuals under **Executive Order 13848**, the standing election-interference authority.

4.10.1.3 *Cuba*

Executive Order 14404 of **May 1, 2026**, designations of eleven individuals and three entities on **May 18, 2026**, **National Security Presidential Memorandum 5** of **June 30, 2025**, and **Proclamation 10998** effective **January 1, 2026** constitute a comprehensive pressure program. **No official United States finding of Cuban interference in a United States election exists**, in 2020 or otherwise; the documented Cuban element in the record is the presence of Cuban personnel in Venezuela during Operation Absolute Resolve.

4.10.1.4 *China*

The Trump administration has moved to sever the oil-revenue channel financing China's relationship with Iran and Venezuela — capturing Venezuelan President Maduro in a January 3, 2026 special-operations raid explicitly tied to Venezuelan oil access, subsequently permitting PDVSA to sell directly to U.S. buyers while continuing to bar Chinese-entity transactions, and imposing successive 2026 Treasury sanctions on Chinese refineries, shipping firms, and front companies moving Iranian crude to China — actions that supply the geopolitical backdrop against which the administration's election-security claims about China must be assessed.

Four evidentiary threads bear on this claim, each documenting a distinct form of Chinese proximity to election-adjacent infrastructure without collectively substantiating a systems-intrusion or vote-manipulation finding.

First, China's relationship with Venezuela was elevated in 2023 to an "all-weather strategic partnership" — a tier granted to only a handful of nations — encompassing over \$10 billion in outstanding loans, satellite ground stations, and the largest Chinese arms-sales relationship in Latin America, establishing state-level access and infrastructure but no documented link to U.S. election systems specifically.

Second, Dominion has operated a Serbian software office since 2011. This office reportedly used a commercial data center ran by a Huawei partner.



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Third, Konnech represents the most concrete documented instance: Los Angeles County prosecutors charged Konnech's CEO after alleging poll-worker PII for roughly two million U.S. poll workers was transferred to China-based contractors, and Detroit terminated its Konnech contract in 2025 following the founder's arrest — though both prosecutors and Konnech maintain this data never touched vote tabulation, confining the exposure strictly to a poll-worker PII channel.

Fourth, and most structurally significant, Chinese-origin components have been documented throughout the U.S. election-machine supply chain for years: a 2019 Interos supply-chain study found that roughly 20 percent of components in a major touchscreen voting machine — including control boards, AI processors, infrastructure software, and touchscreens — originated from China-based suppliers, with 56 to 59 percent of all first-through-third-tier suppliers maintaining at least one Chinese location; congressional testimony in January 2020 saw the CEOs of all three major vendors — ES&S, Dominion, and Hart InterCivic — confirm under questioning that their equipment contains Chinese-manufactured components, citing the absence of viable domestic alternatives; and as recently as August 2026, DHS Secretary Markwayne Mullin formally warned that the three vendors comprising over 80 percent of U.S. voting-machine market share have each acknowledged Chinese-made parts, and moved to condition federal grants on states conducting post-election audits as a mitigation. Taken together, this fourth thread establishes the most systemic and durable Chinese nexus — a hardware and software supply-chain dependency spanning the dominant vendors rather than an isolated incident — but even DHS's 2026 warning frames this as a latent vulnerability requiring audit-based mitigation, not as evidence that the dependency was exploited to alter vote counts or that it supports the specific 220-million-voter-file claim.

4.10.2 Countervailing Arguments

The strongest countervailing fact is internal, not judicial or state: the statutorily required election-threat vulnerability report due May 7, 2026 was not delivered, and the declassified 2024 assessment required within sixty days of that cycle has never been published. Twelve of fifteen named states say they were never notified of any breach. Ohio's chief election official called the underlying data publicly available. The 2020 minority view, written by the National Intelligence Officer for Cyber and backed by then-Director Ratcliffe, itself said there was "no information suggesting China tried to interfere with election processes." The intelligence community's January 7, 2021 classified report and its declassified successor already contained the substance of the 2020 internal dissension now presented as suppressed. EO 13848's own findings language states that "there has been no evidence of a foreign power altering the outcome or vote tabulation in any United States election."



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4.10.3 Important Considerations

Assessment under the potential standard, and the alignment problem across all four states. Treating the acquisition of more than 200 million voter records as a potential precursor to exploitation rather than a proven exploitation, the administration's action is proportionate and substantial: it constrained the state actors with documented capability, hardened customs, exposed the vendor supply chain, and published the record. What it has not done is deliver the statutory assessment that would let states plan against the threat before November 3.

The gap between the action program and the interference finding is itself an artifact of a disclosure failure by government actors. The 2021 assessment's exculpatory conclusions on China and on technical manipulation were reached by an intelligence community whose handling of the 2020 election record is the subject of the declassification program described in Part I, and the products that would permit an independent reader to test those conclusions — the underlying collection, the dissent footnotes, and the analytic tradecraft review — remain classified or unreleased. Equally, the administration's own July 2026 assertions remain unsupported by any released product. Neither the finding nor the challenge to it can be evaluated on the public record, and that condition is the responsibility of the agencies holding both sets of documents.

4.10.4 Ratings

Ratings. E 9 · J 2 · I 6 · S 1 · M 8 · X 7

The five-point spread here is the largest on any vector in the matrix, and the paragraph says so plainly: allegation became documentation, documentation never became a charge. J 6 is explained as procedural undoing rather than any merits ruling. I 5 is described as doubly weighted, since the officials who would document the obstruction premise are the officials the premise indicts.

5 Part III — Cross-cutting drag factors

5.1 Judicial drag

Composite **5.1**. The pattern is consistent: district courts have voided or stayed nearly every instrument that attempted to reach state election administration through claimed federal authority, while leaving untouched every instrument that operated through money, disclosure, personnel, sanctions, or revocation of a prior order. Twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses, three courts against EO 14248, the nationwide stay of the entire operational core of the Postal Service rule, and four permanently enjoined law-firm orders. The financial and citizenship instruments carry the same signature: the



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Ninth Circuit affirmed a preliminary injunction against the southwest border Geographic Targeting Order on July 13, 2026 on Administrative Procedure Act grounds, the Supreme Court held EO 14160 unconstitutional in *Trump v. Barbara* on June 30, 2026, and the District of Maryland preliminarily enjoined the successor order EO 14418 as to a certified class on September 2, 2026. The single counterweight is the Supreme Court's August 24, 2026 stay in the EO 14399 litigation, which indicates the appellate ceiling exceeds the district-court floor and is the most important favorable legal development in the record.

5.2 Internal federal drag

Composite **4.4**. This is the most correctable and least discussed constraint. It has two components that must be scored separately, because they behave differently and because conflating them produces the wrong conclusion about the workforce reductions.

Component one: organized internal resistance, and the doctrine behind it. The premise that career federal employees have been instructed how to obstruct the administration is not an inference; it is published in writing. The Brookings Institution's Democracy Playbook 2025, edited by Norman Eisen and Jonathan Katz and released in January 2025, instructs federal prosecutors and agents that they "should not leave their positions as autocracy looms, but rather remain and insist on doing their jobs, which includes refusing to engage in wrongdoing," and that "To the full extent permitted by law, which is considerable, they can in addition engage in whistleblowing activities... Congress takes the position that whistleblowers may go directly to its members or committees. Whistleblowers have at times gone to the press or filed litigation of their own." That is an explicit instruction to remain inside the government, decline direction, and route information to Congress, the press, and litigation. The same document praises the outgoing administration's civil-service rule for the reason that, while it "will not stop Schedule F from being implemented by a Trump Administration, it will slow it down and make it more difficult to institute" — an entrenchment measure valued expressly for its friction. And it laments the closure of the Global Engagement Center as something that "could weaken the United States' role in combating mis- and disinformation," recommending emulation of European platform-regulation models and "increased governmental resources and an expansion of programs and agencies to support... free media." The playbook is therefore a single document that instructs internal resistance, defends the entrenchment mechanism that protects it, and argues for restoring the information-control apparatus this assessment treats as the core of Vector 05.

The operational layer has a concrete, named instance predating the doctrine above by more than four years. A whistleblower-sourced recording of a live Zoom training session titled "Democracy Defense,"



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convened by Democracy Kitchen and Feds for Democracy and moderated by Nadine Bloch on October 28, 2020 — attended exclusively by self-identified current federal employees — documents a facilitator ("Laura Adams," self-described four-year USAID employee) and a presenter ("Maddie," a self-identified federal management-and-programs analyst) instructing attendees, in advance of the 2020 election, to frame any contested Trump victory as an illegitimate "coup," to "ask for it in writing and slow walk" compliance with executive orders they judged illegitimate, and to move any discussion of concrete action off Zoom into encrypted Signal groups specifically to avoid detection by "your boss." The same session instructed participants that the Hatch Act's partisan-activity restrictions did not apply because their organizing constituted "non-partisan democracy protection," and explicitly proposed mobilizing the federal workforce's "over four million civilian workers, contractors, and other types of staff" as a bloc to determine "what is normal and allowable" independent of the certified outcome. This session establishes that the doctrine articulated in writing by Brookings in January 2025 has a documented operational antecedent — named organizers, a named platform, and recorded tactical instruction — rather than being purely aspirational; it also confirms the encrypted-channel and slow-walk vocabulary later echoed in unattributed reporting patterns.

What remains undocumented is the persistence, scale, or membership of this or successor networks into 2025–2026. A separate network of anonymous federal-employee outlets, including one self-describing as "a collective of current and former federal technologists" publishing anonymous "Real stories from federal employees" and identifying itself as "part of the #altGov team" (We The Builders), solicits confidential submissions from inside agencies, but this assessment could not confirm from primary sources any structural, financial, or membership link between that outlet, the 2020 Democracy Defense session, or Democracy Kitchen and Feds for Democracy as continuing organizations, nor any congressional or inspector-general documentation connecting them.

The leak response and its accountability posture. Three Pentagon advisers were dismissed in April 2025 over alleged unauthorized disclosures concerning a high-profile visit, Panama Canal strategy, a carrier deployment, and an intelligence-sharing pause; they stated they were told nothing about the investigation's specifics and that "Unnamed Pentagon officials have defamed our character with unfounded accusations as we exit," and the official who authorized the leak inquiry moved to a different role the day before ([Politico](#)). A September 19, 2025 seventeen-page memorandum required journalists to pledge that "information must be approved for public release by an appropriate authorizing official before it is released, even if it is unclassified," on pain of losing credentials and access. Beginning October 1, 2025 the Department moved to require roughly **5,000** Office of the Secretary and Joint Staff personnel to sign non-disclosure agreements barring "the release of non-public information without approval or through a defined process" and to submit to random polygraph



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testing ([Press Freedom Tracker](#)). No criminal referral or prosecution of a federal-worker leaker was confirmed from primary sources for this assessment. The instruments deployed are therefore administrative — dismissal, non-disclosure agreement, polygraph, credential withdrawal — rather than prosecutorial, and the press-credential condition on unclassified information is broad enough that it will be litigated.

Workforce reductions read against that record. Three of the largest reductions were justified in exactly these terms by the officials who ordered them. The Director of National Intelligence announced a **40 percent** reduction and more than **\$700 million** in annual savings, stating that the office "has become bloated and inefficient, and the intelligence community is rife with abuse of power, unauthorized leaks of classified intelligence, and politicized weaponization of intelligence," and revoked thirty-seven clearances that same week ([PBS NewsHour](#)). The Public Integrity Section reductions are best understood, as set out under Part I, as the removal of a gatekeeping veto over election-fraud investigation rather than the loss of investigative capacity — and the operative act there was the **suspension of the consultation requirement in early May 2025**, not the headcount. The intelligence-component reductions are best understood against the obstruction record set out under Vector 08: officials who withheld an adverse assessment while publicly certifying the opposite, and who opened investigations on defective predication, were not exercising professional judgment the government needed to retain.

That framing is the correct one for those three cases, and this assessment adopts it. It does not extend to every reduction in the inventory, and the distinction is where the analysis has to be disciplined. CISA lost nearly **1,000** personnel — nearly one-third — taking staffing from roughly 3,400 to about 2,500, with seventeen election-security staff placed on administrative leave in February 2025 ([CBS News](#)). The obstruction case against CISA's leadership layer is documented and strong. The obstruction case against the working-level engineers who would have run adversarial testing is not made anywhere in the record, and the retirement of the Critical Product Evaluation program with Idaho National Laboratory in 2024 removed the only adversarial testing capability aimed at voting systems. That is capability loss, not filter removal.

5.3 Media drag

Composite **6.8**, which makes this the largest single drag factor in the matrix — larger than judicial drag at 5.1, larger than internal federal drag at 4.4, and nearly twice state drag at 3.5. It is also the factor the administration has the least direct power to change, and the one whose measurement rests on the weakest evidentiary base. Both of those things are true simultaneously, and this section is written to keep them in view.



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The dimension does not measure whether coverage was unfair. It measures a narrower and more consequential thing: whether the executive action taken on a given vector was able to acquire the public assent that its survival in a courtroom or a legislature requires. On six of the ten vectors it was not, and the sections below set out what can be documented, what cannot, and where the causal story is weaker than it first appears.

5.3.1 What can and cannot be measured about coverage tone

The honest starting point is an admission. **No neutral academic content analysis of coverage of this administration exists for 2025 or 2026.** The Harvard Kennedy School study that produced the widely cited first-term figures has no second-term successor, and the Pew Research Center's 2025 work on the administration and the press measures audience attention and perceived accuracy rather than tone ([Pew Research Center](#)). Every quantified tone figure available for the current period comes from a single advocacy organization.

That organization is the Media Research Center, which mainstream outlets identify as the "right-leaning Media Research Center" ([Washington Examiner](#)). Its finding for the opening of the second term is that evening-news coverage on ABC, CBS, and NBC ran **92.2 percent negative** — 1,698 negative of 1,841 evaluative statements across 899 stories between January 20 and April 9, 2025, before a combined audience of 19.3 million ([Media Research Center](#)). Its subject-level breakdowns run **93 percent** negative on immigration enforcement and **97 percent** on the federal workforce reductions, the two subjects most closely tied to the vectors in this assessment. Later windows using the same method report **93 percent** negative on interior immigration enforcement in January 2026 ([Media Research Center](#)).

Two qualifications must travel with that number, and this report card states them rather than burying them. First, the method counts only explicitly evaluative statements and discards neutral and descriptive ones from both numerator and denominator, which mechanically inflates whichever share dominates ([Media Research Center](#)). When the Pew Research Center coded the same kind of material with neutral statements retained, it found **44 percent** negative, **11 percent** positive, and **45 percent** neither — a distribution that describes a press corps producing mostly descriptive copy, not one producing nine parts hostility to one part praise ([Pew Research Center](#)). Second, the same organization measured the preceding administration's first eleven weeks at **59 percent positive to 41 percent negative** using the identical coding shop ([Media Research Center](#)). That internal comparison is the figure's real evidentiary value: whatever the absolute level, the same instrument applied to two consecutive administrations produced a swing of roughly a hundred points in net tone.



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A measurement error large enough to explain that gap would have to be an error that reverses sign between presidencies.

5.3.2 The one attempt to quantify the electoral consequence of a suppression event

The media-drag column posits a mechanism: that what the public is not told changes what the public does. That mechanism is ordinarily unmeasurable, because the counterfactual is unobservable. One body of survey work has attempted to measure it directly, it concerns the suppression of the Hunter Biden laptop reporting in October 2020, and it is carried here with its provenance and its weaknesses fully stated because it is the only such attempt in existence.

What was actually asked and found. The Media Research Center commissioned The Polling Company to survey **1,750 Biden voters in seven swing states** between **November 9 and 18, 2020**, with a reported margin of error of 2.34 percent. Of those voters, **45.1 percent** said they were unaware of "the financial scandal enveloping Biden and his son, Hunter." Of the full sample, **9.4 percent** said that had they known, they would not have voted for Biden — a share the organization modeled as sufficient to reverse the outcome and produce **311 electoral votes** the other way. Across all eight stories the survey tested, **82 percent** were unaware of at least one and **17 percent** said knowledge of at least one would have changed their vote ([Media Research Center](#), an advocacy organization). A separate and earlier poll commissioned from **McLaughlin & Associates**, fielded November 2 to 3, 2020 with a sample of 1,000, produced different figures: **36 percent** of Biden voters unaware, **13.1 percent** of those saying it would have changed their vote — **4.6 percent** of his total — and a modeled **289 electoral votes** ([Media Research Center](#)). The same organization published that second figure as **295 electoral votes** on a sister property ([MRCTV](#)), an internal inconsistency in the organization's own arithmetic that a reader relying on the number should know about.

5.3.3 The July 16, 2026 address as the controlled case

The clearest single episode in the record is the President's **twenty-five-minute primetime address to the nation on election integrity**, delivered from the East Room on **July 16, 2026**, for which the White House formally requested live network carriage ([NPR](#); [Associated Press](#)). It is the closest thing this record contains to a controlled test, because the executive action was pure communication: no court could enjoin it, no state could decline it, and no vacancy could slow it. Whatever happened to it happened in the distribution layer alone.



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Network	Handling of the address
Fox News	Carried live and in full
CBS	Preempted programming, joined late, and cut away roughly two minutes before the conclusion — after about fifteen minutes — to address fraud claims
ABC	Not carried on the broadcast network; streamed on ABC News Live and ABC News Radio
NBC	Not carried on the broadcast network; streamed on NBC News NOW
CNN	Not carried on the main cable channel; streamed online
MS NOW	Aired roughly fifteen minutes, then cut away

Sources: [CNN Business](#); [Reuters](#).

One of six major outlets carried a presidential address to the nation in full. The reach consequence is measurable. No Nielsen total was released; the White House livestream had drawn roughly **580,000** views by the following midday, against an ordinary nine o'clock audience in that slot of **2.69 million** on ABC, **2.64 million** on NBC, and **1.14 million** on Fox — implying the address reached on the order of **one-eleventh** of the audience normally available at that hour ([Yahoo News](#)).

The framing that followed was uniform across the outlets that did not carry it. The Associated Press: **"Trump doubles down on US election attacks in his primetime speech"** and, on the underlying documents, **"Trump says these documents prove his false claims of election fraud. Here's what they really say"** ([Associated Press](#); [Associated Press](#)). NPR: **"In primetime speech, Trump doesn't provide evidence for illegal voting"** ([NPR](#)). The *New York Times*: **"Trump Exaggerates Claims About Election Vulnerabilities in Speech"** ([New York Times](#)). The *Washington Post*: **"Trump's speech stops short of offering evidence of vote tampering"** ([Washington Post](#)). CNN characterized the split in carriage as reflecting "a divide that highlighted Trump's long record of lying" and discussed the use of a "truth sandwich" in presenting the address to viewers ([CNN Business](#)).

The White House response identified the mechanism in its own terms, stating that "Radical Left Democrats and their Fake News allies immediately moved to discredit, downplay, and distract" ([White House](#)). The President's response went further: "In a rare move, NBC and ABC fake news have both said they would not cover this speech... Fraud like this should mean a revocation of their licenses" ([Reuters](#)).



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On September 2, 2026 the Secretary of Homeland Security sent the Attorney General a signed letter disclosing two standing election-related referrals, and the White House published the document in full ([Department of Homeland Security](#); [White House](#)). This was a cabinet-level action supported by a primary document rather than by an assertion, on the two most technically substantive questions in the administration's election-security case. In the five days that followed, coverage consisted of a *New York Times* report at print page A22 and a NOTUS story on September 4 ([NOTUS](#)), with the remaining volume supplied by partisan aggregation; **no Associated Press, Reuters, Washington Post, or CNN story on the letter has been located** in that window. That is a distribution outcome consistent with the pattern this section measures, and it corroborates the media-drag scores assigned to Vector 02 and Vector 07 rather than changing them.

5.3.4 The Bartiromo matter, and the one documented editorial instruction

The media-drag column rests overwhelmingly on outcome data — carriage decisions, audience figures, tone counts — because the internal editorial deliberations that produce those outcomes are almost never visible. In the period covered by this assessment one such deliberation became visible, it concerns the July 16, 2026 address specifically, and it is the single most concrete piece of evidence in this dimension.

What the record shows. Following the address, an executive at Fox Business sent guidance to executive producers instructing them not to give the speech "more oxygen by continuing to talk about it on the air the next day." The anchor **Maria Bartiromo** forwarded that guidance to the Trump White House. Fox treated the forwarding as a violation of her contract. She was last on air on **August 9, 2026**, and her departure from the network was announced on **September 3, 2026** ([CNN](#); [CNN](#)). Her attorney, Bryan Freedman, has said that reports she was fired are "absolutely and unequivocally false" (same reporting).

The precision that this item requires, because the loose version of it is wrong. The instruction concerned **next-day discussion of the address, not live carriage of it, and not evidence of election fraud as a subject**. National Public Radio corrected its own account of the matter on that exact point ([NPR](#)). Nothing in the located record shows a Fox directive barring her from reporting on election-fraud allegations, and this assessment does not assert one. The material is also not drawn from the discovery record in the Dominion or Smartmatic defamation litigation, where her broadcasts were central; it surfaced in 2026 through reporting on the internal communication and her departure.



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The presidential messaging, stated exactly. The President posted on Truth Social on **September 3, 2026** that "Maria is a total professional, and a true warrior" ([Truth Social](#)). Under the standing method that post is counted as executive-branch messaging and credited as such. Two things it does not do should be stated plainly, because a reader who checks will find them: the post **does not criticize Fox News**, and it **does not mention the election or the address**. No further presidential statement on the matter has been located. Whatever deterrent or agenda-setting effect the intervention had, it operated by drawing attention to the anchor rather than by naming the conduct.

What it establishes, and the one rating it moves. Read at its narrowest, the episode is a contract dispute at a single network about follow-up coverage of one speech. Read for what it establishes evidentially, it is the only instance in this period in which the internal editorial mechanism that the media-drag column infers from outcome data is directly documented — and it occurred at the one major network that had carried the address in full. It also carries a cost the other direction, and this assessment records it: the anchor who transmitted the guidance to the White House is no longer on air, which is a demonstrated professional consequence for the disclosure rather than for the coverage. On the strength of this documentation the media-drag rating for Vector 05 is scored at **5** rather than 4, which raises the media-drag composite from 6.7 to **6.8**. No other rating moves. The episode is evidence about how the message travelled; it is not hardening delivered, and the net-effectiveness column is unchanged.

5.3.5 Platform distribution: what is documented policy and what is not

The claim requiring the most discipline is the platform claim, because the strongest form of it is documented and the popular form of it is not.

What is documented policy. Reduced distribution of lawful political content is published practice at the largest American platform, in its own words. Meta's transparency documentation describes a demotion regime in plain terms — "we reduce its distribution in Feed for everyone," and "these reductions, also called demotions" (Meta Transparency Center) — and separately describes a borderline-content doctrine under which "we use personalization to reduce the distribution of content that doesn't violate our policies but may get close" (Meta Transparency Center). Content that violates no rule can have its reach cut on the basis of proximity to a rule. That is not an allegation about a hidden practice; it is the published architecture, and it is the correct evidentiary foundation for this part of the vector analysis. Meta's civic-integrity provisions also remain in force notwithstanding the changes described below: the misinformation standard still removes "content that is likely to directly contribute to interference with the functioning of political processes" (Meta Transparency Center).



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Two features of this architecture compound rather than resolve the discipline problem. First, the written policy itself concedes an enforcement gap between rule and practice: peer-reviewed analysis of Meta's own community standards finds they "suffer from ambiguous language" that "hinders the provision of the contextual clarity essential for consistent and fair enforcement," and Meta's Oversight Board — reviewing a mere 0.0018 percent of contested moderation decisions — has overturned nearly 80 percent of the cases it did review, exposing what researchers characterize as inconsistent policy and ad hoc enforcement beneath the published text. A written demotion standard broad enough to cover any content "that doesn't violate our policies but may get close" is, by its own terms, not a fixed rule but a discretionary license whose boundaries are set by whoever applies it — a structure independently documented in 2026 research finding Meta's suppression of a specific viewpoint category "not the result of isolated errors" but of "recurring patterns" in less visible enforcement tools including reduced distribution and shadowbanning that leave users uninformed restrictions exist at all. Second, the effects of past deplatforming do not reset when policy language changes: a peer-reviewed longitudinal study of 165 deplatforming events found that a year after removal, online attention toward deplatformed figures remained suppressed by 63 percent on Google and 43 percent on Wikipedia, with those banned specifically for misinformation showing the deepest and most persistent reduction. That finding matters for this analysis because it means any 2025–2026 policy loosening — reduced fact-checking, lighter labels, ended demotion commitments — does not restore reach already lost during the 2020–2024 enforcement period; the suppression's effect outlives the written policy that caused it, and no documented mechanism reverses the residual reach deficit for previously flagged accounts. Both observations reinforce rather than undercut the report card's core caution: a written policy this elastic functions less as a rule than as a standing authorization to suppress at discretion, and the record of enforcement inconsistency shows that discretion has in fact been exercised unevenly, subject to whichever institutional or political pressure was operative at the time.

What is not documented. A current dataset, audit, or subpoenaed internal record demonstrating ongoing viewpoint-based suppression of election-integrity content in 2025 or 2026 does not exist in public form. The strongest documentary basis for the proposition remains the 2022 internal disclosures at the platform now called X, which were released selectively and were contested at the time (BBC). This report card therefore does not assert current, ongoing, viewpoint-targeted suppression as a finding. It asserts the narrower proposition the evidence supports: that distribution of political content is discretionary, that the discretion is exercised through published ranking policy whose own vagueness has been independently criticized as enabling inconsistent enforcement, that any suppressive effect already applied compounds forward even after policy is loosened, that the



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discretion is not auditable from outside the platform, and that no federal instrument in this record has made it auditable.

Two federal non-deliveries belong in this column, and both are within the administration's own control. The Federal Trade Commission opened an inquiry into platform censorship on February 20, 2025, docket FTC-2025-0023-0001, expressly targeting platforms that "deny or degrade (such as by 'demonetizing' and 'shadow banning')" user access, with comments closing May 21, 2025 (Federal Trade Commission). No staff report or findings from that docket have been published as of September 7, 2026. Separately, Executive Order 14149, "Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship," signed January 20, 2025 and published at 90 FR 8243, directs the Attorney General in Section 3(b) to investigate four years of federal conduct and report to the President with recommended remedial action (White House; Government Publishing Office). No public product of that requirement has appeared in the twenty months since. The order's diagnosis was correct and its policy section is sound; its only affirmative deliverable has not been delivered, and the absence of a federal evidentiary record on platform conduct — including any record capable of measuring residual reach effects from prior enforcement — is a direct consequence.

The countervailing evidence on platforms is substantial and runs the other way. Platform policy loosened materially in the administration's favor during precisely the period this report card covers. On January 7, 2025 Meta ended third-party fact-checking in the United States, moved to Community Notes, and committed to "stop demoting fact-checked content," replacing full-screen interstitials with lighter labels and conceding that the prior regime had produced "intrusive labels," "reduced distribution," and a tool that "too often became a tool to censor" (Meta). YouTube told the House Judiciary Committee that Biden-administration pressure had been "unacceptable and wrong," that it "will never use third-party 'fact-checkers,'" and that it would offer creators removed over election and pandemic speech a path back to the platform (House Judiciary Committee) — though independent reporting establishes that the path is a "limited pilot program" for a "select group of creators" with no count of reinstatements given (CNBC), and even full reinstatement, per the deplatforming research above, would not restore an account's pre-suppression audience baseline. And the *Murthy v. Missouri* litigation, which the Supreme Court resolved on standing grounds in June 2024 without reaching the merits (Justia), ended in a federal consent decree announced March 24, 2026 barring the federal government from acting "formal or informal, directly or indirectly" to threaten named platforms with punishment unless they "remove, delete, suppress, or reduce, including through altering their algorithms" protected speech (Missouri Attorney General).



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That consent decree is a real and durable win, and it is scored as one. But note what it does and does not do. It constrains the government, not the platforms. It removes the federal thumb from the scale while leaving the scale itself — the demotion architecture described above, its documented ambiguity, and the persistent reach deficit that architecture already produced in accounts flagged before 2025 — entirely intact and entirely unaudited. The 2020 information-control problem had two components, a governmental one and a private one. The governmental component has been dismantled, as set out under Vector 05. The private component has been left to the platforms' own discretion, exercised through policy language broad and vague enough to function as a license rather than a rule, with effects that outlast the policy itself — and the one federal instrument aimed at examining it has produced no findings.

5.3.6 The court of public opinion, the Overton window, and Vector 04

The proposition that one must prevail in the court of public opinion before one can reasonably expect to prevail in a court of law is usually offered as an adage. It is better than that: it is an empirically measured relationship, and the measurement is what connects this section to the judicial-malfeasance vector.

The framework is the one developed in the mid-1990s by **Joseph P. Overton** of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, whose model of how the range of politically possible ideas shifts over time rests on the premise that "politicians are more followers than they are leaders" ([Mackinac Center for Public Policy](#)). Overton died in 2003 without publishing a formal treatment, and the concept's originating institution is a free-market advocacy organization — but it is the correct primary source for the definition, and the definition is descriptive rather than ideological.

The empirical work on the judiciary is stronger than the framework. In the leading study, Casillas, Enns, and Wohlfarth examined Supreme Court terms from 1956 through 2000 and found that public mood translates into judicial output at close to parity: a **long-run multiplier of 1.05**, which the authors gloss as "roughly a 1 percent increase in the proportion of liberal reversals for every 1 percent shift of public mood," with **97 percent of the total long-run effect realized within two terms**, and — most relevant here — with the effect **strongest in nonsalient cases**, where the short-term coefficient rises to 1.68 ([American Journal of Political Science, via University of Maryland](#)). The authors' own summary is that "the influence of public opinion on Supreme Court decisions is real, substantively important, and most pronounced in nonsalient cases."

That last clause is the finding that matters for this report card. Election-administration litigation is nonsalient litigation. A dispute over whether the Civil Rights Act entitles the Justice



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Department to a statewide voter registration list is not a case the public follows; it is exactly the class of case in which the measured effect of public mood on judicial behavior is largest. The twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses tabulated under judicial drag, the three courts against the citizenship order, and the nationwide stay of the Postal Service rule were all decided in that low-salience register, by judges operating inside a professional consensus that this administration's election-fraud premise is unsupported — a consensus that the coverage described above maintained daily and that the administration did not dislodge.

The demand side of the relationship is visible in current polling. Supreme Court approval stood at **42 percent** in April 2026, and Republican approval fell from **78 percent to 70 percent** in three months following the February 2026 ruling against the tariff authority, while **66 percent** of the public favored that ruling against 33 percent opposed and Republicans opposed it 61 to 39 ([Marquette Law School Poll](#)). Partisan publics update their assessment of the judiciary on the basis of outcomes, and the judiciary operates in an environment where two-thirds of the public endorsed the most consequential ruling against the President's asserted authority. **A court that rules against this administration on an election matter incurs no public cost for doing so.** That is the mechanism by which media drag becomes judicial drag, and it is why Vector 04 carries a media drag score of 8 against an effort score of 3: the messaging campaign against judicial malfeasance is the one component of that vector the administration can execute unilaterally, and it is operating into an audience that sides with the courts.

5.3.7 Assessment

Media drag is the largest drag factor in this matrix at **6.8**, and the finding is defensible on the documented carriage record, the published platform ranking policy, the nonpartisan trust and belief measurements, and the peer-reviewed transmission mechanism into judicial output. The strong version of the claim — that hostile coverage and covert platform suppression are the principal reason the administration's election-security program did not deliver more before November 3, 2026 — is not defensible, and this report card does not make it.

The defensible version is narrower and more useful. Coverage and distribution conditions denied this administration the one asset it could not manufacture unilaterally: majority public acceptance of the evidentiary premise underlying its election-security case. Without that acceptance, the low-salience litigation in which election administration is actually decided ran inside a professional consensus the administration never dislodged, and the measured relationship between public mood and judicial output tells us that this was not incidental to the twenty-one consecutive voter-roll losses. **The remedy indicated by this section is not better messaging.** It is the release of evidence the



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government already holds — the withheld technical examination of voting equipment, the outstanding statutory vulnerability assessment, and the Attorney General's unproduced report on federal censorship conduct. Each of those is within the administration's own control, each would convert an asserted premise into a documented one, and their absence is the reason the most aggressively covered vectors are also the ones where the public case is weakest.

5.4 State drag

Composite **3.5**, and much higher on the two vectors that matter most. State drag is the binding constraint on Vector 01 at 9 and Vector 02 at 6. Twenty-six states, the District of Columbia, and two governors are suing DHS and FEMA. Georgia moved away from the federal barcode preference. Michigan's statute affirmatively forecloses the documentary citizenship proof the federal government is requesting. Against that, twelve states enacted proof of citizenship on their own initiative and Texas banned paperless direct-recording electronic systems effective September 1, 2026 — the two most consequential hardening measures of the cycle, both accomplished by states.

6 Part IV — Composite scorecard

Vector	E	J	I	S	M	X
01 Election record integrity	9	8	4	9	5	6
02 Electronic voting systems integrity	8	5	5	6	9	4
03 Election results certification integrity	4	4	6	5	6	2
04 Judicial malfeasance	3	9	2	1	8	1
05 Information control	9	3	4	1	5	9
06 Financial influence	9	6	4	2	5	6
07 Privatized election operations	8	2	3	3	7	7
08 Seditious conspiracy	8	6	5	1	8	3
09 Weaponization of government	9	6	5	6	7	6
10 Foreign interference	9	2	6	1	8	7
Composite	7.6	5.1	4.4	3.5	6.8	5.1



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Five cells in the matrix carry more weight than the rest, because they are where a large body of executive action meets an instrument that no court or state has been able to reach. Vector 01 net effectiveness sits at **6** on the border and removal program, which is the only component of that vector neither enjoined by a court nor nullified by a state: southwest border encounters fell 79 percent year over year and Border Patrol apprehensions reached their lowest level since 1970. Vector 06 scores **9** on effort and **6** on net effectiveness on the cartel-finance architecture — eight Foreign Terrorist Organization designations, the first orders ever issued under 31 U.S.C. § 2313a, the southwest border Geographic Targeting Orders, and a measured 62 percent decline in suspected human-smuggling financial reporting — together with the documented \$640.9 million termination of the Shelter and Services Program; its judicial drag is **6** because the Ninth Circuit affirmed an injunction against the Geographic Targeting Order, and its reform effect is visible in the control changes at the largest small-dollar conduit. Vector 10 net effectiveness is **7** because physical access control at the border is a completed, self-executing foreign-interference measure, and because the counterfeit identity-document interdiction pathway is a documented channel. Vector 05 net effectiveness stands at **9**: the information-control apparatus was not merely disclosed but dismantled at four self-executing points — the Global Engagement Center and its successor office, the principal foreign-assistance funding channel, direct federal funding of the public broadcasting entity, and the multi-institution content-flagging partnership — with the clearance-revocation instrument operating on the individual level alongside them. Vector 07 effort stands at **8** on the collapse of the interstate voter-list consortium, the Albert sensor terminations, and the September 2, 2026 referral that is the first federal legal instrument aimed at either private intermediary, and is constrained by the fact that the one body empowered to withdraw a test laboratory's accreditation now has no seated commissioners. Vector 08 is carried by the Michigan enrollment mechanism, which supplies a strong evidentiary basis without changing what any federal instrument can accomplish against a state statute before November 3. Birthright citizenship moves nothing in this cycle by design — a person born in 2026 votes in 2044 — and is scored as high effort, high judicial drag, and near-zero net effectiveness for this election.

Overall effort: 7.6 of 10. The volume, breadth, and institutional seriousness of executive action across these ten vectors exceeds that of any prior administration by a wide margin, and the margin widens once the border and citizenship program is counted. More than twenty presidential instruments with a direct or proximate election nexus, 562 pages of declassified primary-source material, the first federal grant conditions in history tying money to hand-count audits and citizenship verification, thirty-state litigation, two grand juries, roughly one thousand planned monitors, a



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sustained presidential communications campaign, and the largest single-year reduction in border encounters in the modern record.

Overall net effectiveness for November 3, 2026: 5.1 of 10. The gap between 7.6 and 5.1 is the entire analytical finding of this assessment, and it decomposes cleanly. Media drag at **6.8** is the largest single component of that gap, judicial drag at 5.1 the second, internal federal drag at 4.4 the third, and state drag at 3.5 the fourth — though state drag remains the binding constraint on the two vectors that touch the mechanics of voting most directly. Net effectiveness is unchanged by the addition of the media dimension, because that column measures hardening actually delivered; what the new dimension does is attribute a share of the gap that the other four columns could not explain.

What worked is what did not require anyone else's consent: revoking a prior executive order, revoking clearances, declassifying documents, terminating an agreement, designating foreign organizations, imposing sanctions, and rescinding appropriations. Vectors 05, 07, 10, and 06 — information control, privatized election operations, foreign interference, financial influence — score highest precisely because their instruments are self-executing. Vector 07 is the clearest case: dismantling the Albert sensor and information-sharing-center architecture eliminated a nationwide aggregation point outright, with no court able to reverse it and no state able to decline it.

What did not work is what required a court's tolerance or a state's cooperation. Vectors 01, 02, 03, and 04 — the four that touch the actual mechanics of casting, counting, and certifying — score lowest because every instrument aimed at them ran through a court or a state election office, and most were stopped in one or the other.

Two measures stand above the rest, and they work in opposite directions. The DHS five-percent pre-certification hand-count audit condition is the most consequential prospective measure, because it is a detection control operating on evidence that already exists, and detection is what the 2020 record shows was missing. Its effectiveness will be determined by how many states accept the condition rather than forgo twenty percent of their grant, and that will not be known until well after November 3. The dismantling of the Albert sensor and information-sharing-center architecture is the most consequential completed measure, because it removed a national aggregation point rather than adding a process, and it is already fully in force.

7 Call for Action Before November 3, 2026

Everything addressed thus far establishes that the effort has been extraordinary in scale and that most of what limited it lay outside executive control: twenty-one consecutive voter-roll judgments, three



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district courts against the citizenship order, a nationwide stay of the operational core of the Postal Service rule, a majority of states declining to produce the records federal law requires be preserved, and a coverage and distribution environment that composites as the largest single drag factor in the matrix. None of that is curable by November 3, and none of it is a criticism of the administration's will or its execution.

Three things are curable, they are the entire remaining upside available in this cycle, and all three lie wholly within the administration's own control. They require no court's tolerance, no state's cooperation, no legislation, and no appropriation. Each is a document the federal government already possesses or a capability it recently held. They are set out here as instructions rather than as observations.

One — deliver the outstanding vulnerability assessment. The election-threat vulnerability report required by **50 U.S.C. § 3371a(b)** was due **May 7, 2026** and has not been delivered, and the declassified assessment required within sixty days of the 2024 cycle has never been published. States cannot plan against a threat picture they have not been given. This is the single highest-value action remaining, because it is a statutory duty already overdue, it is owed to the officials who administer the election, and delivering it costs nothing but the decision to do so.

Two — declassify and publish the Election Infrastructure Subsector Cyber Risk

Summary in full. The March 2021 summary, together with any successor editions, documents exploited-class vulnerabilities across election infrastructure, seven-fold overruns of the agency's own remediation deadlines, and nation-state acquisition of voter registration data from a state election website. It was restricted from disclosure by the same agency that publicly certified the 2020 election as the most secure in American history. Publishing it converts that record into something the jurisdictions that actually own the equipment can act on, and it does so through the one instrument this administration has used more effectively than any predecessor. It also repairs, at the most credible point available, the disclosure asymmetry that Part III identifies as the reason the July 16, 2026 address could not be corroborated by the network that carried it.

Three — restore an adversarial testing capability. The retirement of the Critical Product Evaluation program is the one genuine technical capacity loss in the internal-drag column. Replacing it restores the government's own ability to test voting equipment independently of the accredited private laboratories whose accreditation no seated body can currently withdraw, which is the structural gap identified under Vectors 02 and 07.